PHD

The disabling borders of nation

An exploration of the causes, impact and possible alternatives to current intersectional inequalities associated with disability and forced migration in the UK

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of Bath
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Dedication

This work is dedicated to all those who suffer and struggle against the injustices associated with disability and forced migration. It is an attempt to understand and contribute to addressing these injustices.

Acknowledgements

This PhD would not have come to fruition without the input of many people.

I thank my main supervisor Aurelien Mondon for his patience, solidarity and analysis which have been core to getting through many gruelling times during this study. This was combined with input from Naomi Millner, whose methodical questioning, scrutiny, and attention to detail have been invaluable.

Beyond the academic contribution, I would like to thank the many people who shaped my motivation and ideas. It has not been an easy time. I have lost several people who were important to me, and who shaped my ideas. Most importantly, my mother developed my awareness and commitment to the needs and rights of minorities. Her lived experiences of war and forced migration became her determination and commitment to challenge injustice.

My friend Manjeet Kaur died in April 2020. Her insights and experiences of disability and migration helped to shape my ideas and were central to my motivation. I will be forever grateful for her friendship, including the many interesting and fun discussions.

I will never forget Kamil Ahmad who was murdered in July 2017. This was the last of an ongoing litany of injustices that he experienced. His relentless struggles against a disabling asylum system, never squashed his belief in justice. His ideas continue to shape my thinking, including his insistence that he would only be involved in research which is useful and respectful to those contributing.

In addition, I thank the many people who contributed ideas, insights, and energy, particularly those who helped to organise events which brought together disabled asylum seekers, citizens, and allies. Many of these people cannot be named but I thank you all.

I thank my son, Ivan, who consciously, or not, contributed many thought-provoking ideas, as well as providing the necessity for important physical and mental breaks.

Finally, I thank all those people who believe in, and work for, a better world. At the time of writing it feels like our only hope is our solidarity. Therefore, my most enduring thanks is to all those who contribute to that goal.

Abstract

Studies of disability and of forced migration have both generated their own significant fields of academic enquiry. In addition, a small body of literature brought academic attention to the intersectional inequalities associated with disability and forced migration, however, the causes and appropriate solutions to these struggles remain underexplored both in terms of theoretical understanding and practical response. This thesis is one of the first efforts to address this gap, bringing the sectors into conversation with each other, to learn from the perspectives of each and to develop more effective alternatives to contemporary inequalities. Assuming that no social order is inevitable, the study investigates how hegemonic representations of the needs and entitlements associated with disability and forced migration in the UK are determined, reinforced, and contested.

An innovative methodological approach combines elements of action research, with a poststructuralist theoretical framework. Drawing on elements of the Essex school of discourse theory, analysis explored the discursive logics used in key policy documents determining current entitlements associated with disability and forced migration in the UK. The study then investigated how these logics are reinforced or contested by people with diverse subject positions in the asylum sector or disabled peoples movement. Broad consensus was found as to the need to address the injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers. Nonetheless, respondents with diverse roles and responsibility framed systemic change as unachievable, with the horizon of achievable change limited to the ostensibly pragmatic goal of identifying individuals worthy of some mitigation of policy restrictions. People with lived experience of the impact of current inequalities provided the central insights and motivation for this study. However, when survival depends on fitting hegemonic perceptions of worth, people cannot be responsible for leading the resistance or the development of alternatives. The action research element of the methodology therefore included the organisation of public events, bringing together the disabled people's movement, the asylum sector, academics, local authority employees and others, to learn from disabled asylum seekers, build solidarity and collaboratively consider possible solutions.

Recommendations include the need for:

- a 'social model' of asylum, building on the social model of disability. This would facilitate understanding of the disabling impact of the asylum system on those subject to restrictions on the ability to meet human needs.

- collaborative learning from the lived experiences of disabled asylum seekers to build solidarity and to challenge intersectional inequalities.

- publicly engaged academic research to contribute to the paradigmatic shift required.

The study concludes that the experiences of disabled asylum seekers could provide the impetus to develop a broad-based movement of mutual solidarity through which to

contest intersectional injustice and contest the distinctions of human worth which have become hegemonic in contemporary neoliberal society.

Key words: disability, asylum, forced migration, refugees, intersectionality, contingency

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Glossary of Abbreviations and key terminology

DPO Disabled People's Organisation

ICIBI Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

NHS National Health Service

NGO Non-governmental organisation

UN United Nations

UNCRPD United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

UNCSR United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees, commonly known as the '1951 Refugee Convention'

UNHCR United Nations High Commission for Refugees

VPRS Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme

Disability - I use the term Disabled People as the preferred terminology of the disabled people's movement in the UK (See for example: Reclaiming our Futures Alliance Reclaiming our Futures Alliance (ROFA), 2019). This includes:

> people with physical, cognitive and sensory impairments, people with learning difficulties; people who are neuro-diverse; Deaf people, deafened, hard of hearing people, mental health system survivors/people who experience mental distress and people with long term health conditions.

Taking a social model perspective, it is argued that 'it is the economic, social, cultural, physical and attitudinal barriers operating in society that disable and exclude people with impairments'. Disability is, therefore, understood as a form of oppression, which, like other forms, can be contested.

Migration status – People with different forms of migration status are referenced in this study according to categories of legal entitlement, as outlined by the Refugee Council (2019).

Refugees

People seeking asylum get refugee status if they are judged to meet the definition in the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951):

> A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not

> having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

People with refugee status in the UK are given five years' leave to remain and are eligible to access the welfare state and health system during this time. After this period, they must apply again for indefinite leave to remain or return to their country of origin. People selected for resettlement, such as through the Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme (VPRS 2014) may be granted refugee status before arriving in the UK.

Asylum Seekers

People seeking asylum in the UK have formally applied for protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention and are waiting for a decision. During this period, which may go on for years, people are subject to immigration controls, including possible detention for unlimited periods.

Refused asylum seekers

If a claim for asylum is refused, then people may lose entitlement to housing, financial support, and secondary healthcare. They also become at greater risk of detention or deportation. If people are judged as unable to return to their country of origin, then they may be entitled to limited support under section 4 (2) of the Immigration and Asylum Act (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999). However, people assessed as eligible for community care, under the Care Act (The Care Act, 2014), may maintain eligibility if to remove them would be a breach of human rights (No Recourse to public funds network (NRPF)).

In addition, people who are forced to flee their country of origin but do not seek asylum are commonly referred to as 'undocumented', 'irregular' or 'illegal' migrants. In this study, unless distinctions of entitlement are relevant, I make generic reference to forced migration.

Intersectional experiences of disabled asylum seekers and refugees

This study focuses on intersectional (see for example: Crenshaw, 1989) experiences, adopting the terms disabled asylum seekers and refugees to denote people facing barriers associated with disability and forced migration.

Introduction

> I'm disabled… we are in the same boat, kind of… they tell me things to do as a disabled person, you can go here, do this, do that… But at the end of the day, I'm an asylum seeker, it changes everything.
>
> (Manjeet Kaur, cited in: Yeo and Bolton, 2013, p.49)

'It makes no sense', a disabled migrant repeatedly lamented as he faced the prospect of eviction and becoming street homeless. Speaking anonymously in a short film made for local Councillors, he spoke of the toll homelessness would take on his physical and mental health: 'they push you to be crazy man… They want me to become dirty, nasty and crazy' (Yeo and Spencer, 2018). He was aware that after becoming 'crazy', he might again become eligible for housing.

This person is not alone in facing such disabling restrictions meeting human needs as to make life a struggle for survival. Before starting this doctoral research, I worked closely with a group of seven disabled asylum seekers (Yeo and Bolton, 2013) as part of a wider project with UK Disabled People's Council. This group taught me of the relentless and systematic restrictions hindering access to the services and support necessary to meet basic human needs. At the time of writing, seven years later:

- one has been murdered, after unsuccessfully seeking police protection.
- two have died of cancer, having delayed seeking medical advice in the knowledge that secondary healthcare is unavailable to people without legal migration status.
- one has disappeared, having been excluded from multiple support organisations for disruptive behaviour related to mental distress.

This study is designed to understand what determines and perpetuates such injustice that appears to 'make no sense', and how it is being, or could be, effectively contested. I investigate the key government policies determining the services and support available to disabled asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. Assuming that no social order is inevitable, I explore how hegemonic representations of the needs and entitlements associated with disability and forced migration become reinforced, or contested by people with diverse roles and responsibilities in the asylum sector and disabled people's movement. Most importantly, my focus and motivation is to understand how the situation could be otherwise. I therefore investigate responses to current inequalities and consider how a moment of more fundamental political contestation might be achieved.

Existing literature on disability and forced migration

This is not the first study to consider the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. A seminal study by Jennifer Harris and Keri Roberts (2001) brought the existence and injustices faced by disabled asylum seekers in the UK to academic attention. This was

followed by a small body of studies highlighting different elements of the injustice experienced (Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008; Burns, 2017; Yeo, R., 2017a). This evidence of injustice does not, however, appear to have resulted in significant improvement to lived experiences of disability and forced migration.

In addition to the specific work regarding disabled asylum seekers, this study builds on previous analysis of the contingency of social relations. This is not a study in political theory, however, elements of political philosophy facilitate understanding of the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. The concept of hegemonic common-sense, developed by Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1971) and interpreted by many others (including: Simon, 1982; Crehan, 2016), helps explain the persistence of the inequalities shaping the contemporary social order. Gramsci argues that, without analytical intervention, the interests of the ruling class become hegemonic, shaping public understanding or 'common-sense' perceptions of the existing social order and possibilities for change. In the contemporary UK context of capitalism, financial profit is prioritised, and human worth is hegemonically assumed to be associated with economic contribution. Economist, Richard Swedberg, explains:

> what is unique about capitalism, as compared to economic systems based on redistribution or reciprocity, is that it alone is primarily driven by the profit motive (2005, p.7).

As disability scholars have analysed, the result of this prioritisation of profit is that people with impairments which limit economic productivity face structural barriers meeting human needs (Russell and Malhotra, 2002; Oliver and Barnes, 2012; Clifford, 2020). The intersectional restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers may be hegemonically perceived as inevitable but are contingent on wider constructions of worth. Awareness of the contingency of current injustice highlights the possibility of change and forms the central motivation of this study. This study is designed to contribute to the development of more effective resistance and contestation of the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees.

Motivation and Positionality

My motivation and political perspective are further shaped by my lived experiences, which therefore require more specific consideration. I became disabled more than 20 years before starting this study. For more than ten years I was unable to use my arms, walk, stand, or sit for long periods and for a relatively short period I was unable to talk or chew. The onset of this condition was rapid, which meant I experienced a sharp contrast between life as a young, non-disabled adult living an active city life, and becoming a disabled person, unable to continue with 'normal' life as I had known it, reliant on friends and disability services to meet daily needs. I became acutely aware of disabling barriers resulting from society being structured to prioritise the needs of non-disabled, economically productive individuals. These barriers were not new, but

the prioritisation had previously worked in my favour. I also became aware of the potential transformation stemming from a change in theoretical perception, such that I remember where I was when I read Alan Sutherland's (1981) book, *Disabled We Stand*. His analysis introduced me to thinking of the existence of disabling barriers as a social construction which could be contested, rather than as the inevitable result of a tragic impairment. Subsequently, I experienced and learned from the power of solidarity and resistance provided by the disabled people's movement. I continue to live with chronic, albeit now more manageable pain, but my life now fits more easily within hegemonic assumptions of normality. Nonetheless, these lived experiences of disability frame my political position, my perceptions of possibility, and this study.

Beyond experience of disability, my personal motivation for this study is shaped by my understanding of forced migration. I am the daughter of a refugee and grew up with stories of the associated struggles, injustices and need for resistance. These stories were so integral to my upbringing as to shape what I observe, consider important and how I respond. In the wake of the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999), as hegemonic public discourse appeared increasingly focused on the need to reduce the apparent burden of migration, I began volunteering in a charity working with asylum seekers and refugees. I met people seeking asylum who had lost the right to access the welfare state or to choose where to live. People were forcibly dispersed, away from friends and support networks, to areas of cheap accommodation around the country. However, I was struck by the low expectations of this charity. The objective of their work appeared to be how to support people to navigate the system, to reduce the negative impact of these restrictions and to maximise potential for individuals to be framed as an exception, worthy of support. This charity response left the hegemonic notion that *some* humans are a burden, unworthy of support, effectively uncontested.

By this time, my lived experience and ongoing involvement with disability politics meant that collective responsibility to address the access barriers faced by disabled people, had become the 'common-sense' by which I understood the world. I was employed in a charity working with disabled people. When I began volunteering in the asylum sector I was surprised by the disjuncture. Meetings were held in inaccessible venues. There appeared to be little awareness of the existence of disabled people or collective responsibility to consider access needs and remove disabling barriers. As I learned more about the asylum system, I became similarly frustrated by the apparent lack of consideration in the disabled people's movement of the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. Almost a decade later, welfare reforms introduced in the wake of the 2008 financial crash resulted in drastic cuts to services and support, disproportionately impacting disabled citizens (Cross, 2013; O'Hara, 2014). Protestors initially came together under the banner 'the hardest hit' (Gentleman, 2011). Commonalities with the restrictions imposed on asylum seekers since 1999 (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999) were thereby concealed. I became aware of the enduring division between disabled citizens and asylum seekers, despite increasing commonalities of experience.

The study is in part motivated by the quest to understand how such segregation could be overcome and effective intersectional resistance could be realised.

Outline of purpose and methodological approach

With the personal motivation and positionality that I have outlined, I designed my research to enable improved understanding as well as to contribute to addressing ongoing injustices associated with disability and forced migration. I investigate how the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration in the UK are determined, reinforced, and are, or could be, effectively contested? For this purpose, I build on existing literature and analyse the perspectives of people with diverse subject positions.

Assuming that the current social order, like any other, is changeable, I adopt a poststructuralist theoretical framework in which contingency is core to the analysis. This framework is combined with elements of action research, bringing together the perspectives of people with wide-ranging roles and responsibilities in the asylum sector and disabled people's movement. My analysis was informed by elements of the poststructuralist Essex school of discourse theory, particularly drawing on elements of the logics approach to critical explanation developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007). I began by investigating what are the dominant discursive struggles determining government policies which shape the current entitlements associated with disability and forced migration? As political theorist Carol Bacchi (2009) argues, policy cannot be understood without examining the problem it is designed to address. I therefore investigate representations of the 'problem' on which these policies are focussed. I then turned to investigate how hegemonic discourse is reinforced or contested by people with different subject positions? This included people with roles and responsibilities for implementation of formal and informal entitlements. To understand the impact of this policy and practice relies on the expertise of people with lived experience. The injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees are the motivation for the study and must be central to solutions. I therefore include examples of these lived experiences throughout the analysis.

Having analysed representations of the problem to be addressed, my attention turned to how these representations frame current responses and how a moment of more fundamental political contestation might be achieved? To answer this question, I draw on the distinction made by French philosopher Jacques Rancière (1999) between: a moment of politics in which those who previously had no part, claim a part, resulting in substantive hegemonic contestation of social relations; and policing, whereby attention is focused on pragmatic adjustments rather than systemic contestation. The action research approach was designed to increase understanding and contribute to a process of change. This was achieved through specific attempts to bring the voices of disabled asylum seekers and refugees to a wider audience. When considering an issue that has received so little attention, it may appear as if simply raising awareness of

ongoing injustice is itself a means of contestation. However, if issues of disability and migration are hegemonically framed as burdens on the wider population, then evidence of disadvantage on affected people appears unlikely to result in significant change. Therefore, analysis focused on how effective contestation might be realised and alternatives developed.

Map of thesis

The thesis is made up of seven chapters. These are summarised, before beginning the more substantive discussion.

Chapter 1

To develop a conceptual framework from which to make sense of the experiences of disabled asylum seekers, the study draws primarily from the disciplines of disability studies, migration studies, and intersectionality. However, this literature must be understood in the context of wider social and economic relations. The chapter therefore starts by investigating literature regarding hegemony. This serves to explain the process by which it becomes 'common-sense' for some people's needs to be prioritised above others. The concept of hegemony facilitates understanding of the contingency of existing restrictions associated with disability, forced migration and intersectionality. Normative representation of non-disabled citizens of the nation-state frame intersectional experiences such as those faced by disabled asylum seekers as, perhaps unfortunate, but as an insignificant minority within a minority (Harris and Roberts, 2001). As argued by scholars of international development (Wood, 1985; Zetter, 1985), the imposition of labels of 'other' reinforces distinctions of power. Labels may determine which characteristics are made visible, what commonalities are highlighted, and thereby shaping perceptions of the problem to be addressed. Where the existence of disabled asylum seekers is referred to at all, euphemistic labels of 'vulnerability' often replace reference to being disabled. Such labelling obscures commonalities with the wider disabled peoples movement (Yeo, R., 2019). Furthermore, it locates the problem with the individual, rather than with the barriers that are faced. As such it undermines previous achievements of the disabled people's movement, including the focus of the social model of disability (Oliver 1983) on the collective need to address systemic barriers. The chapter finishes by exploring wider literature regarding the contingent nature of the social order, thereby highlighting the possibility of change on which this study is based.

Chapter 2

This chapter introduces the theoretical framework. A poststructuralist approach is adopted, drawing particularly on the Essex school of discourse theory. The contingency exposed by this approach is core to the development of alternative forms of social organisation. The analytical approach of this study draws on elements of the logics of critical explanation (Glynos and Howarth, 2007). In addition, analysis of forms of contestation draws on the distinction made by Rancière (1999) between policing the

ongoing system, and a moment of politics whereby those with no part take their part. I choose this framework as most appropriate for the objectives of my investigation, however, the chapter ends by exploring possible weaknesses of poststructuralism.

Chapter 3

The theoretical framework underpins methodological choice and rationale. Discourse theory was combined with elements of action research and phenomenology, privileging the expertise of lived experience. This chapter lays out the research questions and the four-stage process of investigation. My intention is to privilege the perspectives of disabled asylum seekers; however, I do not seek to quantify or to prove the existence of injustice. Instead, I analyse what underpins current injustice and how it could be effectively contested. For this purpose, stage 1 of this study is not to investigate lived experience, but to analyse the dominant discursive logics (Glynos and Howarth 2007) shaping the government policies which determine current restrictions associated with disability and forced migration in the UK. In Chapter 3, I list the specific documents subject to analysis and explain the rationale for this choice. Stage 2 of the study investigates the perspectives of people with responsibility for implementation of policy and practice. This includes people with diverse roles and responsibilities in the asylum sector and disabled people's movement. Stage 3 explores how hegemonic discourse is reinforced or contested by disabled asylum seekers and refugees, with lived experience of the impact of current intersectional policy and practice. As contributors to this study explained to me, the immediacy of struggles for survival prevents people from building resistance. The development of alternatives therefore depends on solidarity. The final research stage focusses on the results of bringing together people with diverse subject positions to discuss the nature of the problems experienced and how these could be addressed.

After outlining the methodological states of investigation, the chapter turns to logistical considerations, including sampling, use of interpreters and ethical matters. These first three chapters form the theoretical basis for the empirical analysis.

Chapter 4

This first analytical chapter focuses on the dominant discursive logics (Glynos and Howarth 2007) adopted by the key policy documents determining current intersectional entitlements. More specifically, the investigation considers the UK government legislative White Paper, *Fairer, faster and firmer* (1998), which formed the basis for the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999) and continues to shape the restrictions experienced by disabled asylum seekers. This is followed by analysis of discursive representations underpinning the resettlement of refugees labelled as 'vulnerable' following conflict in Syria. These policy documents highlight distinctions between people framed as worthy of support, and a wider migrant population framed as inherently burdensome. These distinctions are central to understanding the inequalities faced by disabled asylum seekers. In relation to disability, analysis begins with the Beveridge lecture given by then Prime Minister Tony Blair (1999) in which he summarised his vision for welfare

reform. The discursive basis of these reforms is replicated in later policy, implemented by the Coalition government and subsequent Conservative governments. These ongoing welfare reforms reduce provision of state services and support, with a shift from collective to individual responsibility. Analysis of the discursive logics underpinning policy form the basis for analysis in subsequent chapters of how the hegemony of elite discourse is maintained, adjusted, or contested by people with different subject positions.

Chapters 5 and 6

Analysis then turns to the perspectives of people with different subject positions regarding the problems associated with disability and forced migration. Chapter 5 focuses on the perspectives of people with a wide range of roles and responsibilities for implementing policy and practice in the asylum sector and disabled people's movement. This is followed, in Chapter 6, by analysis of the perceptions of disabled asylum seekers themselves. Both chapters consider how discursive representations reinforce or contest the hegemonic discourse. Broad consensus was found among contributors to this study, that current restrictions associated with disability and forced migration are unjust. Assuming the contingency of the social order, the questions become why the current situation remains, and how effective alternatives can be developed.

Chapter 7

The final chapter turns to analyse how representations of the problem in previous chapters shape perceived solutions. Analysis focuses on existing and proposed initiatives regarding issues of disability and forced migration. Analytical distinctions are drawn between initiatives that reinforce, reflect, or contest the hegemony. Several initiatives have been adopted by the Home Office focusing on the needs of people labelled as 'vulnerable' (Great Britain. The Home Office and The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, 2014; Shaw, 2016; Bolt, 2019; Office, 2019), the criteria of which include disability. These measures were endorsed by voluntary sector contributors to this research. However, I argue that such initiatives adopt and reinforce hegemonic distinctions of entitlement between those framed as worthy of support and those who are not.

In addition to Home Office initiatives, I analyse broad categories of discursive solution presented by the asylum voluntary sector. Such action may mitigate the impact of systemic restrictions for some people, however, in assuming the value of pragmatic consensus, these efforts fail to contest hegemonic discourse of inequality underpinning ongoing distinctions of entitlement. Finally, my analysis turns to initiatives organised as part of this study, designed to contest hegemonic distinctions of entitlement and to build a broader resistance, bringing together the disabled people's movement and the immigration sector.

The sequence of these chapters enables focus on the process by which discursive distinctions become hegemonic such as to appear inevitable. It is however important that this research focus and methodological choice does not result in relegating the apparent significance of lived experience. My call for contestation of hegemonic inequalities is not to obscure the urgency of addressing immediate struggles for survival. I therefore include examples of the impact of current policy and practice throughout the thesis.

This investigation reveals that the injustice faced by disabled asylum seekers is underpinned by hegemonic discursive logics such that some people are framed as unworthy of support. As a result, far from 'not making sense', denial of entitlement to meet basic human needs is the direct and logical result. However, this analysis highlights the contingent nature of any social order. If response is limited to pragmatic adjustments, replicating hegemonic common-sense inequalities, then systemic distinctions of entitlement remain unscrutinised. The current absence of systemic contestation does not mean that it is impossible. As Frances Ryan (2019, p.200) argues in relation to the injustices faced by disabled citizens: 'How things are is not how they need to be'.

Chapter 1. Literature review: The construction and contingency of hegemonic distinctions of human worth regarding disability, forced migration and intersectionality.

> *There are always too many of them. 'Them' are the fellows of whom there should be fewer – or better still none at all. And there are never enough of 'Us'. 'Us' are the folks of whom there should be more.*
>
> (Bauman, 2004, p.34)

This study investigates the causes and possible solutions to the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration in the UK. For this purpose, a multi-disciplinary approach is taken, predominantly bringing together literature from the disciplines of sociology and political theory associated with disability and migration, as well as building on a small body of work specifically focused on the intersectional experiences of disabled asylum seekers. This chapter reviews the primary literature on which the study is based, before turning to the theoretical framework and the empirical analysis in subsequent chapters.

The injustices currently experienced by disabled asylum seekers cannot be understood in isolation from the wider social order. The chapter therefore starts, not with specific focus on disability or forced migration, but by investigating hegemonic constructions of normality and common-sense, drawing on the insights of Gramsci (discussed by: Simon, 1982; Thomas, 2010; Crehan, 2016). The apparently common-sense basis of what is considered normality obscures its constructed and contingent basis, with overt labelling reserved for those categorised as 'other'. Literature regarding the nature of labelling is therefore considered, before turning to academic discussion of the impact on three more specific constructions of 'othering': disability, migration status, and intersectionality. The small body of literature regarding the experiences of disabled asylum seekers is considered in the context of these wider debates. The social construction of difference highlights the contingency of contemporary structures of inequality. This chapter, therefore, finishes with an exploration of literature associated with contingency and the possibility of alternatives, focusing on debates regarding how inequalities are, or could be, contested. This discussion introduces principles of the poststructuralist theoretical framework to be investigated in the next chapter.

1.1 Hegemonic narratives of normality and 'other'

Hegemonic narratives of normality shape the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration. I therefore begin by exploring the meaning and impact of hegemonic assumptions of normality and associated processes of othering. The term hegemony originates from ancient Greek, describing the state, or hegemon, with political and military advantage. It was developed by Gramsci (1971) to explain

why Marxist predictions of communist uprising had not taken effect, and has become widely discussed since then. Gramsci argues that a person's perspective is 'mechanically imposed' (Crehan, 2016, p.52) depending on their subject position. According to Gramsci, the power of the Greek hegemon has been replaced by what he refers to as cultural hegemony, whereby the needs of the dominant social class become 'common-sense'. Access to information is controlled by the media, educational and political bodies, such as to promote modifications of behaviour and perceptions of possibility. The resultant inequalities are not necessarily condoned, but subjugation is perceived as 'a fixed and unchangeable reality it would be futile to oppose' (Crehan, 2016, pp.51-52). If the dominant social order appears inevitable, then to rebel is as nonsensical as seeking to halt the tide, as King Canute famously showed (Raglan, 1960). According to Kate Crehan (2016), Gramsci's notion of common-sense does not have the normative dimension which it holds in English. Rather, it is what Roger Simon (1982) describes as the 'uncritical and partly unconscious way in which people perceive the world'. In this thesis, I argue that common-sense assumptions of inevitability are core to understanding the persistence of contemporary inequalities associated with disability and forced migration.

Hegemonic constructions of normality and 'other' are critically significant to this study. The concept of 'othering' stems from post-colonial studies, most notably the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988), who herself draws on Gramsci's notion of the 'subaltern', referring to people ruled by the dominant social class (Crehan, 2016, p.51). Spivak argues that Eurocentric approaches constitute colonial populations as if they cannot speak. In a lecture entitled 'Vulnerability and resistance', gender theorist Judith Butler (2014) develops Foucauldian principles, arguing that 'Few struggles are more important than those that question so-called common norms'. She focuses on gender; however, her analysis is applicable to struggles associated with disability and forced migration. Normative constructions of normality construe the 'other', according to Nathalie Grove and Antony Zwi, 'as a point of deviance' (2006, p.1933). Situating certain groups as 'other' enables inequalities of perceived human worth and associated entitlement. The concept of entitlement is used in this thesis to mean what Brenda Major (1994) describes as legal rights to services and support, as well as less formal assumptions of moral imperative, legitimacy, and status. The othering of disabled asylum seekers may result in peoples' needs being disregarded or being judged as exceptionally worthy of generosity. Either way, this categorisation of difference is relational and asserts the superiority of the apparent norm.

It is not new for hegemonic constructions of normality to be exclusive. The assumed nature of 'normality' changes through history and geography (Link, 2006). Focusing on nineteenth century USA, legal historian Barbara Young Welke (2010, p.63), argues that the notion of 'people' was assumed to mean 'able, white and male'. In a different context, the fascist policies of Nazi Germany constructed normality on the basis of more specific notions of Aryan traits. Disabled activist and researcher Liz Crow (2009) documents how disabled people were among the first to be framed as 'abnormal' and

to become targets of genocide. Mainstream contemporary discourse now presents these policies as monstrous, abnormal, and associated with one of the 'evil periods' of history (Mondon and Winter, 2020). However, then, as now, government policies are implemented not by monsters, but by 'normal' people. In her famous essay on the trial of Adolf Eichmann (a chief architect of the Nazi Holocaust), the philosopher Hannah Arendt (1964, p.276) refers to him as 'terribly and terrifyingly normal'. This reference to normality provoked criticism from those who understood normality to carry a normative judgement of acceptability, and for whom Nazi practices could be attributed to a monstrous 'other'. However, Arendt was not excusing Eichmann, but asserting that evil can take place within constructions of normality. It was then that she coined the phrase, 'the banality of evil'. Her analysis highlights that normative dimensions of assumed normality facilitate the lesser entitlement of the 'other'. Despite the different historical and geographical context, Arendt's perspective facilitates my analysis of the experiences of disabled asylum seekers, returned to in Chapter 6.

The social order is shaped by normative conceptions of normality associated with ableism (Campbell, 2009, 2012), citizenship (Marshall, 1950; Pisani, 2012), and whiteness (Eddo-Lodge, 2018). These multiple dimensions of assumed normality intersect to frame disabled asylum seekers as an insignificant 'other' within the 'other'. Notions of normality may be sufficiently hegemonic as to appear natural or 'common-sense' and thereby avoid scrutiny. The precluding of public debate to specific issues of contestation is described by Rancière as political aesthetics (2004, p.8). The result is to limit public dissent to adjusting definitions of 'other', rather than contesting definitions of normality and distinctions of human worth.

Hegemonic constructions of normality not only relate to categories of people, but also to wider societal structures. Significant shifts have taken place regarding hegemonic assumptions of the 'normal' location of responsibility in political discourse since World War Two. These shape contemporary distinctions of entitlement associated with disability and forced migration, and therefore require investigation. When founding the National Health Service (NHS), Labour Party politician Aneurin Bevan (1952) asserted collective responsibility to provide healthcare for all in order to address the fear and misfortune associated with illness. By the 1980s, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher asserted a shift to individual responsibility. This formed part of a package of principles described as neoliberalism, analysed by David Harvey (2007). Rather than collective responsibility to support those experiencing individual misfortune, individuals became constructed as architects of their own misfortune. According to Henri Giroux (2008, p.594), in neoliberal capitalist society, there is little collective responsibility for 'the losers'. Writing together with Brad Evans, he describes the impact of this shift in the assumed location of responsibility:

> Imagine a world where those who live on the margins … are condemned for their plight, while those who control the political process prosper from those very policies that bring about social abandonment … Imagine a world that has lost all faith in its ability to

> envisage – let alone create – better futures, condemning its citizens instead to a desolate terrain of inevitable catastrophe … we can imagine this world all too easily … a world that has become normalised and for which there is no immediate alternative – a world we understand as neoliberalism. (Evans, B. and Giroux, 2015, p.1)

Neoliberalism may result in 'inevitable catastrophe' however, these principles shape contemporary hegemonic understandings of normality. If responsibility is located with the individual, collective resistance is hindered. Instead, apparent solutions become focused on dreams of individual salvation through hard work, luck, and the grasping of opportunities for survival or betterment. Philosopher Ernst Bloch (1986, p.18) describes how individualised conceptions of escape hinder collective organisation. Without apparent systemic alternatives, as Bauman (2004, p.99) explains, people do not want to 'think of our unhappy condition'; instead people seek 'the agitation that takes our mind off it and diverts us'. As will become apparent in subsequent chapters, the persistence of hegemonic distinctions of entitlement relies on this lack of perceived alternatives. If contestation is limited to seeking to adjust definitions of 'other' with associated entitlements and thereby to frame individual escape as the only feasible goal, then the systemic basis of inequalities remains intact. Yet, as Rancière (1999, p.16) explains, 'no social order is based on nature'. The location for effective contestation requires analysis of the contemporary political context framing hegemonic understanding of normality and other.

Normality in a contemporary liberal democratic context

The othering of certain groups is not necessarily an aberration but may be within the perceived normal functioning of a social order. In her analysis of US history, Welke asks:

> How long can we dismiss persistent exclusions as simple steps yet to be taken in the long road to achieving the liberal ideal? ... Might we consider the troubling thought that borders of belonging … are constituent elements of the 'liberal' state? (2010, p.156)

In the contemporary UK context, 'persistent exclusions' appear within the liberal democratic state. According to political theorist Chantal Mouffe (2005b, p.4), the rhetorical conjoining of liberalism and democracy attempts to combine paradoxical traditions: 'democratic logics always entail drawing a frontier between "us" and "them", those who belong to the "demos" and those who are outside it'. The 'democratic' rights of those who 'belong' are prioritised over those who do not, thereby creating an intrinsic contradiction within the assumed individual liberty of liberalism. Similarly, Rancière (2006, p.74) argues that liberal democracy fails to respect individual liberty when it 'relates to the protection of borders and territorial security'. More specifically referring to contradictions between liberal democracy and asylum policy, Vicki Squire (2009, p.5) explains that 'the articulation of asylum as a security issue necessitating intensified border controls undermines the very freedoms that are central to a liberal democratic way of life'. If the democratic unit of legal authority determining eligibility to services is

centred on the nation-state, then there are associated assumptions of the need to control who enters and leaves the state.

Regular elections of political representatives are core to hegemonic conceptions of liberal democracy. As Rancière (2006, p.73) explains, 'the ballot boxes are generally not rigged and one can verify it without risking one's life'. However, when democratic involvement is focused on elections, 'the same dominant personnel is reproduced, albeit under interchangeable labels' (ibid). Assumptions of synonymity between elections, democracy, and citizenship may be particularly disadvantageous to asylum seekers, who are systematically disenfranchised by lack of entitlement to vote or influence public decision making. Maria Pisani (2012, p.189), refers to 'the political clout of the illegal 'other' as non-existent'. The sense of being unrepresented and alienated from political decision making is not, however, unique to illegal 'others'. In a previous study, disabled asylum seekers used public art to convey their key messages (Yeo and Bolton, 2013). As shown in Figure 1, people described relentless struggles to overcome barriers meeting basic needs.

Figure 1: Mural conveying the key messages of disabled asylum seekers, (Yeo and Bolton, 2013)

Despite the particularly acute barriers faced by disabled asylum seekers, passers-by, seeing the mural, expressed surprise at commonalities with the inequalities shaping their own lives. Contemporary inequalities are clearly not exclusively determined by disability or migration status.

This study focuses on the experiences of disabled asylum seekers, without suggesting that the associated inequalities are unique. This reflects an ethical as well as an academic position. As Bevan (1952, p.177) warns, to focus on the plight of any group, risks promoting 'indifference to others'. In opposition to normative conceptions of majoritarian priority, Bevan argues that 'not even the apparently enlightened principle of the "greatest good for the greatest number" can excuse indifference to individual suffering' (1952, p.178). Without hegemonic goals for equality, struggles for relative entitlement are central to the survival of marginalised individuals. In the context of neoliberalism, Arjan Appadurai (2006, p.6) writes of the 'intolerable anxiety' created by the retraction of state responsibility, whereby 'entitlements are frequently directly tied to who "you" are and thus who "they" are' rather than to meeting human needs or creating equality.

Contestation requires a target beyond a broad sense of injustice. Recognition of systemic injustice associated with capitalism or globalisation fails to provide a tangible target for blame, instead, Appadurai (2006, p.44) argues that minorities provide this target. The sense of injustice may be increased if a small minority is perceived as disrupting the assumed majority and prime legitimacy of citizens of the nation-state. According to Appadurai (2006, p.53), 'the smaller the number and the weaker the minority, the deeper the rage about its capacity to make a majority feel like a mere majority rather than a whole and uncontested ethnos'. The struggles faced by marginalised minorities thereby highlight the fragility of the perceived majority. Asylum seekers, and particularly disabled asylum seekers, may thereby be framed not as an irrelevant minority in the context of the inequalities of international capitalism, but as an illegitimate burden, and therefore responsible for wider perceived injustice.

The British electoral system is predicated on assumed correlations between democracy and majority decision making. In an earlier project in which I focused on the perspectives of employees in the immigration sector, the lack of attention paid to disabled asylum seekers was explained by interviewees as the result of minority status (2015b). The implication is that focusing on majority needs is normal and democratically justified. However, according to Nicos Poulantzas (2008), it is common for a minority elite to use democracy to constitute their interests as those of the majority. The lack of entitlement and power of disabled asylum seekers may therefore stem not so much from minority status but from the fragmentation and disempowerment of the numerical majority. With this conception of the social order, contestation might be more effectively achieved by highlighting the commonalities between disabled asylum seekers and the wider population rather than persuading the minority elite to provide for a specific set of needs.

Many political and sociological analysts explore inequalities of entitlement to services and support, within current political structures, albeit without reference to the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. Research by Mackenzie et al. (2017, p.227) exposes the inequalities in service provision beyond formal policies. They cite an

interviewee explaining that at all levels of service provision 'from the receptionist to the GP and the practice managers', patients are favoured if it is 'easy for you to be helped'. The capacity for the provider to notice progress and to feel good about their contribution appears paramount. The complexity of the barriers faced by disabled asylum seekers may therefore compound the denial of support.

Beyond issues of minority status or electoral power, the disadvantage experienced by asylum seekers within current political structures appears to be associated with hegemonic assumptions of the legitimate and inevitable prioritisation of citizens of a nation-state. Yet, despite hegemonic assumptions of normality associated with nation-states, as Eric Hobsbawm (1975, p.105) writes, 'there is nothing logical' about their creation. Instead, they are based on what Benedict Anderson (1983) refers to as an 'imagined community'. In her doctoral research, Ruth Garbutt (2003) investigates the lack of citizenship rights afforded to disabled people. Her unexamined normative assumption is that disabled citizens should be treated like non-disabled citizens, not that non-citizens should be treated as citizens. The greater moral and legal entitlement of citizens appears so natural as to be unquestioned.

The denial of access to services and support for certain groups can be further linked to neoliberal focus on individual responsibility and economic productivity. The goal then becomes removing people framed as a burden on the wider population. According to Bauman (2004, p.59), the process is akin to Michelangelo's description of designing a sculpture as simply removing the unwanted parts. UK government policies restricting the entitlements of asylum seekers will be examined in detail in Chapter 4, for now, suffice to note that the explicit purpose is to remove unwanted migrants or to deter people from entering the UK (UK Parliament, 1999). Yet, as Bauman (2004) explains, the creation of 'wasted lives' and 'wasted products' is intrinsic to the capitalist system. Similarly, Giroux (2008, p.594) refers to the 'disposable' lives of people framed as economically unproductive, describing the power of neoliberalism 'to define who matters and who doesn't, who lives and who dies'. In this context, sociologist, Imogen Tyler describes how:

> public anxieties and hostilities are channelled towards those groups within the population … who are imagined to be a parasitical drain and threat to scarce national resources. (2013, p.9)

If the overriding framework is not common humanity but the prioritisation of profit in a capitalist economy, then the needs of those framed as a burden are of marginal importance. Hence, as I will argue, the experiences of disabled asylum seekers are the logical conclusion of hegemonic conceptions of normality within the context of liberal democratic capitalism.

Attention now turns to academic discussion of labelling associated with othering, before turning more specifically to consider literature associated with disability and forced migration.

Labelling of the 'other'

Understanding processes of othering is essential to effective contestation. All labels imply distinctions between those with, and without, associated characteristics. In her analysis of Gramscian notions of the subaltern, Crehan explains that:

> privileged women of the global North have found themselves continually having to perform scripts written by men, they too, at least in this respect, inhabit a subaltern reality. Living in a world where the dominant scripts on offer have not been written by people like you is one of the defining characteristics of subalternity. Subalterns live in a common-sense world rooted in the narratives of those who dominate them. (2016, p.61)

Gramsci's concept of subalternity was not limited to a particular social class. The distinction that he made was between 'oppressed rather than oppressing' (Crehan, 2016, p.185). It is the structures of oppression which create the subaltern, or the oppressed 'other'.

Notions of universalism may appear to contest processes of othering. Bill Ashcroft (2008, p.235) defines universalism as a 'hegemonic view of existence by which the experiences, values, and expectations of a dominant culture are held to be true for all humanity'. However, this approach has been widely criticised by post-colonial scholars. Writing with regard to universal approaches to understanding of disability, Shaun Grech (2009, pp.771-772) warns against 'the exportation of ideas and models from north to south, together with inferences from the western context about the presumed situation of disabled people in developing countries'. Nonetheless, highlighting the common barriers faced by disabled people could help build the solidarity needed for effective contestation. Focusing on distinctions of national context may obscure the commonalities of human need, encapsulated in Abraham Maslow's (1943) famous hierarchy. As he outlines, human needs include physiological (including food, shelter, and security), psychological (sense of belonging, friends, and intimacy), as well as self-fulfilment and sense of achievement. As a theory of universal human motivation, his hierarchy obscures cultural differences and the myriad of distinctions in people's priorities, however, the commonalities in human needs are important. In this study, I assume that the problems experienced by disabled people and asylum seekers are located with the barriers experienced, rather than with distinctions of need.

Labels of identity may obscure commonalities of human need. According to sociologist, John Holloway (2010), labels imply that 'the other is not part of us and we are not part of the other'. With regard to refugee experiences, Roger Zetter (1985, p.101) is similarly critical, arguing that labels impose 'differentiation, perhaps even stigma'. He writes of the inherent inequalities between the labelled and the labeller. The power and ideological persuasion of the labeller determine who or what is labelled as 'other', which by implication reinforces the assumed inverse status of 'normality'. Such distinctions are reiterated by Grech (2009, p.226) in the context of international development, arguing that 'however "participatory" processes may claim to be, it is ultimately

professionals who make up definitions'. Labels of administrative entitlement risk obscuring wider commonalities and thereby exacerbating divisions.

Beyond formal distinctions, labels can affect how a person is seen and sees themselves. Butler (2015b) describes the 'performative effect' of labels of identity. As she explains, 'The names we are called are just as important as the names we call ourselves… the speech act can animate us in embodied ways'. This builds on Frantz Fanon's (1967) account of racism, '*Black Skins, White Masks'*, in which he argues that systemic oppression results in people adopting aspirational identities other than their own. This theme is taken up by Holloway (2010, p.216) who argues 'take away the mask and you find a face that has been distorted by the mask and by resentment of the mask'. However, the nature and impact of a label are contingent on wider social relations.

Labels are not inherently oppressive. According to Geof Wood (1985, p.3), labels are an inevitable part of the management and understanding of the social world. They may be a tool for governance, determining entitlement to services and support. This may create false distinctions, however labels may also be a means of acknowledging shared experience, building peer support, solidarity, and resistance. Miriam Ticktin's (2011, p.166) anthropological work is centred on the 'sans-papiers' movement in France, a group she describes as heterogeneous, brought together through 'a label they claimed as a means to emancipation'. The potential for emancipatory impact may depend on the degree of individual choice. Audre Lorde (2018, p.41) writes, 'If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive'. Shared experience and identities are core to emancipatory movements, as outlined in the aptly titled article by Fran Branfield: 'What Are You Doing Here? "Non-disabled" people and the disability movement' (1998). According to her (1999, p.299), 'to claim "I am disabled" is a political statement. It is to align oneself with other disabled people in a struggle for equality'. Labels may thereby be a means of facilitating resistance to a social order.

In this study, reference to 'disabled asylum seekers' is potentially problematic as it is not necessarily a label chosen by those affected. However, the term is used as a means of focusing the investigation. Furthermore, the label may also contribute to asserting a 'logos' or common identity which may serve to assert existence, such as to raise wider awareness of intersectional barriers. Rancière describes a:

> symbolic distribution of bodies that divides them into two categories: those that one sees and those that one does not see and those who have logos – memorial speech, an account to be kept up – and those who have no logos. (1999, p.22)

This 'logos' may be the basis for organising resistance and therefore be an essential prerequisite in the political struggle for equality. The label 'disabled asylum seeker' could facilitate location of people's struggles in the context of wider, ongoing struggles associated with disability and migration status. To this purpose, attention now turns

more explicitly to academic discussion regarding labels of disability, forced migration, and intersectionality.

1.2 Construction and contestation of entitlement associated with labels of disability

Academic analysis of disability highlights how labels may be used to build oppression, charity, solidarity, or resistance. Changing representations of disability result in different understandings of the problem and appropriate policy solutions. In the 1970s, the UK-based Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) began to challenge hegemonic representations of disability as an individual tragedy to be solved by charitable relief (the charity model), or by medical intervention (the medical model). They asserted the ground-breaking claim that 'it is society which disables physically impaired people', stressing that 'we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society' (1976, p.4). UPIAS fundamentally challenged previously hegemonic understanding of disability from an individual issue requiring medical attention or charity, to a collective issue requiring the removal of barriers. The restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled people were presented as a socially constructed response to an impairment, rather than an inevitable consequence of a medical condition.

This intervention resulted in long-lasting challenge to theoretical and political understanding of disability. The hegemonic contestation initiated by UPIAS (1976) was developed and promoted by disabled sociologist and activist Michael Oliver (1981) among others, to become the 'social model of disability'. This became an ontological explanation of social and economic relations, as well as a framework for personal and collective liberation. Like many disabled people, Crow describes the transformational impact of the social model:

> My life has two phases: before the social model of disability, and after it. Discovering this way of thinking about my experiences was the proverbial raft in stormy seas. It gave me an understanding of my life … enabled me to confront, survive and even surmount countless situations of exclusion and discrimination … It has played a central role in promoting disabled people's individual self-worth, collective identity, and political organisation. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that the social model has saved lives. (1996, p.55)

The appeal of the model stems partly from the affective dimension of shifting focus from the impasse of an individual's medical condition to the collective responsibility and solidarity required to address the socially constructed, and therefore more clearly changeable, nature of society.

Beyond personal liberation, the social model explains the oppression of disabled people as inextricably linked with capitalist modes of production. If society is structured to prioritise economic profit (Nee and Swedberg, 2005), then people with impairments that limit productivity become framed as a burden. In a compilation of writing by

members of UPIAS (2018, p.45), former anti-apartheid activist from South Africa, Vic Finkelstein, argues that 'the maximum-profit motive' must be transcended to address the marginalisation of disabled people. Developing these principles further, Oliver writes:

> if the game is possessive individualism in a competitive and inegalitarian society, impaired people will inevitably be disadvantaged, no matter how the rules are changed. (1996, p.35)

He argues that to challenge such individualism requires challenging capitalism. Similarly, disability activist Ellen Clifford argues that lack of provision for disabled people is integral to the capitalist quest to maximise profit. As she explains, providing:

> services for family, work and health contributes towards the maintenance of a healthy workforce and, through that, to productivity. Expenditure on disabled people does not. (2020, pp.47-48)

This anti-capitalist understanding of disability was not confined to UK-based analysis. In the US, Marta Russell and Ravi Malhotra (2002, p.212) describe disability as a 'socially-created category derived from labour relations, a product of the exploitative economic structure of capitalist society'. This thesis builds on the analysis of these writers, understanding the disadvantage associated with disability as directly attributable to capitalist relations of production.

The language of the social model of disability became increasingly hegemonic during the 1990s, however, the anti-capitalist analysis was increasingly obscured. Social model rhetoric was adopted by government and voluntary sector, including major disability charities (Oliver and Barnes, 2012), some of whom, according to Oliver (2013, p.1025) began to 'act as if they invented it'. The New Labour government led by Tony Blair expressed commitment to the social inclusion of disabled people, establishing the Disability Rights Commission in 1999**.** However, the focus was on collective responsibility to remove the barriers faced by disabled people, rather than to address the structural oppression created by capitalism. A public awareness campaign used billboards stating: 'see the person, not the disability'. Disabled academics Tom Shakespeare and Nick Watson (2001) recall that this campaign was widely opposed by activists, asserting that the solution is to address the oppression not to conceal the disability. Referring to similar struggles in the representation of disability in the US, Russell and Malhotra criticise:

> the 'minority' model of disability, which views it as the product of a disabling social and architectural environment. In this view the fundamental source of the problems encountered by disabled persons is prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes, implying that by erasing mistaken attitudes society will accept 'difference' and equality will flourish. This approach diverts attention from the mode of production and the concrete social relations that produce the disabling barriers, exclusion and inequalities facing disabled persons. (2002, p.212)

The co-option of the social model may have reduced the original anti-capitalist basis. Nonetheless, hegemonic representation of disability shifted from an individualised issue of medical tragedy to a collective focus on the need to remove barriers.

Contemporary understanding of disability does not, however, end with the co-option of the social model. As neoliberalism became more entrenched, the focus of government policy shifted from the collective responsibility on which the NHS had been founded (Bevan, 1952), to wider focus on reducing government expenditure and increasing individual responsibility. The nature and implications of this shift are discussed in Chapter 4, however, here it is necessary to outline academic analysis of these broad developments. The quest to reduce government expenditure on welfare provision had been a gradual process since its post-war inception. A significant shift towards individual responsibility was introduced in 1979 by Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (Gregg, 2008). Support for these goals by New Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair (1999) forms part of what Mouffe (2005b, p.6) describes as giving up the 'traditional struggle of the left for equality', thereby removing the quest for equality from mainstream political discourse. However, the starkest reduction in the welfare state took place in the wake of the 2008 financial crash (O'Hara, 2014; Patrick, 2017), in the form of the Welfare Reform Acts (UK Parliament, 2009, 2012). The resultant shift to a focus on individual responsibility was incompatible even with the co-opted version of the social model of disability.

Change to hegemonic understanding of disability was required to enable policy change. The biopsychosocial model was developed by academics Gordon Waddell and Mansell Aylward (2009) from the Centre for Psychosocial and Disability Research at Cardiff University, with funding from Unum, the US insurance company with a key role in implementing UK Welfare reform (Jolly, 2012). This model was originally developed by George Engel (1977), combining social, psychological and environmental factors alongside biological understanding of health and disease. It was adopted by the World Health Organisation (2002) as part of their classification of functioning, disability and health designed to provide holistic understanding of health and impairment. However, Waddell and Aylward (2009, p.1) developed it further, bringing together elements of the 'medical model, various social models and the role of personal and psychological factors'. According to these academics:

> People with common health problems … bear personal responsibility for their actions: they must answer to whether their health condition is such that it would be unreasonable to expect them to seek or be available for work. (Waddell and Aylward, 2009, p.6)

The motivation and impact of this ostensibly theoretical policy have been challenged by activists (Jolly, 2012) as well as by academics themselves critical of the social model of disability (Shakespeare, Watson and Alghaib, 2016). However, it continues to shape elite discourse and particularly, welfare reform policies.

Beyond government contestation, there has been wider debate: it has been suggested that the social model fails to recognise the impact of an impairment (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001). Without diminishing her support for the social model, Crow stresses that:

> we have one fundamental difference from other movements, which we cannot afford to ignore. There is nothing inherently unpleasant or difficult about other groups' embodiment: sexuality, sex and skin colour are neutral facts. In contrast, impairment means our experiences of our bodies can be unpleasant or difficult … for many disabled people personal struggle related to impairment will remain, even when disabling barriers no longer exist. (1996, p.4)

However, as she also argues, the social model of disability does not deny the impact of impairments. Instead, the focus is on contesting associated distinctions of human worth and enabling people to meet human needs irrespective of an impairment.

There are problematic issues associated with the labelling of disability irrespective of which model an individual adopts. If stigma is associated with disability, as Paul Hunt (1966) argued prior to establishing the disabled people's movement, then it may appear irrational to voluntarily identify as disabled unless associated entitlements, or a counter-narrative, can be asserted. According to Shakespeare and Watson (2001, p.20) many people with impairments do not identify as disabled. Instead, they 'downplay the significance of their impairments and seek access to a mainstream identity'. This tendency may be particularly strong for people in the precarious situation of waiting for a decision on their asylum claim. Identification as a disabled person may also depend on how disability is perceived in a person's country of origin. Drawing on postcolonial literature, Grech (2009) criticises what he perceives as attempts by UK activists to impose the social model of disability on the wider world. However, if the disadvantage associated with disability is understood to result from capitalism, then the country of origin is not as significant as the economic system. Reluctance to adopt labels of disability may relate to ongoing assumptions of incompatibility with normality. Bill Hughes (2019, p.842) refers to 'the approbation of non-disability as a proper way of being-in-the-world'. Unless such assumptions are contested, the stigmatising impact of labels of disability remains. An alternative to binary labels of disabled and non-disabled is proposed by Fiona Kumari Campbell's (2012) notion of ableism. This refers to the social structures which systematically exclude people with impairments. A focus on ableism enables a shift from potentially unhelpful competition between marginalised groups which can result from identity politics. There is little need for people to individually adopt a label if the focus is on contesting structural barriers. However, this may weaken the potentially emancipatory power of claiming a label as a focus for contestation.

The discursive struggles in the framing of disability are core to understanding the intersectional experiences of disabled asylum seekers as will be examined, but first, it is necessary to consider constructions of migration.

1.3 Construction and contestation of entitlement associated with migration status

To understand the origins of inequalities associated with disability and forced migration it is necessary to understand distinctions of migration status as well as disability. As outlined in the glossary, there are multiple categories of migrant, including 'asylum seeker', 'refused asylum seeker' or 'refugee', with associated differences in entitlement. Such categorisation is not constant. The 1951 Refugee Convention entitled people seeking protection from persecution to the same rights as citizens. The term 'asylum seeker' first entered the Oxford English Dictionary in 2001, distinguishing between those awaiting a final legal decision on their claim for protection and those granted refugee status. The greater legal entitlement associated with refugees may explain governmental reluctance to grant such status (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011, p.27). Asserting objection to political inference of questionable legitimacy associated with people awaiting a legal decision, Tom Vickers (2012), p.1) rejects the term 'asylum seeker', instead using 'refugee', 'to encompass all those who have come to Britain seeking refuge, whatever the status currently accorded them by the British state'. Similarly, Markard (2017) argues that a person becomes a refugee when fleeing their country of origin, not when this status is recognised by the host country. Differences in entitlement associated with migration status are not universal. As anthropologist Didier Fassin (2016) observes, in 'the Global South, people are collectively considered to be refugees based simply on their being a fugitive from a war zone' whereas, in the 'North', the term asylum seeker delineates those whose credibility as a fugitive awaits individual assessment. The legal status associated with the label is a measure of a person's entitlement, but not their need for support. The distinction in entitlement obscures commonalities of needs and may shape a person's chance of survival. As Maya Goodfellow (2019, p.35) writes, 'by crossing a border, you can cease to be a human being to the people around you, becoming an ("illegal") immigrant or a ("bogus") asylum seeker'. The dehumanisation and stigma associated with different labels are integral to the restrictions experienced. As Tyler (2020, pp.124-125) asserts:

> it is only when publics no longer see those seeking refuge as human beings that state governments can openly and unashamedly engage in practices of segregation, incarceration, expulsion, and torture.

Whatever the label, distinctions of entitlement associated with migration status are politically constructed, rather than innate to experiences of seeking sanctuary.

The complications do not end with distinctions between refugee and asylum seeker. Barrister Jon Holbrook explains that legal distinctions between lawful and unlawful migration are neither determined by levels of need nor are they static:

> The man fleeing a war-torn country is a lawful migrant; the man fleeing grinding poverty isn't. The lesbian fleeing a homophobic state is a lawful migrant; the woman fleeing in search of the medicine that would save her life isn't. (2016 online)

The criteria for lawful migration change over time and space with resultant change in people's perceived options and behaviour. In a previous study (2015b), a voluntary sector employee explained to me that as the system becomes increasingly punitive, increasing numbers of migrants avoid claiming asylum and, instead, seek informal means of existence. The need to remain clandestine may avoid immigration enforcement procedures, but also prevents use of health care or social services and may therefore be particularly problematic for disabled people.

Dominant terminology regarding categories of migration carries normative implications. Squire defines irregular migrants as 'those who enter … or … reside within a nation-state without authorisation' (2009, p.4). She dissociates her definition from those who 'describe forced migrants as illegal migrants', believing that this 'would appear to criminalize those who have no choice but to migrate' (2009, p.188). This suggests a normative perception of legality, reflected in efforts to avoid the term 'illegal' in migration literature. A flier from the Institute for Research into Super Diversity (IRIS) at the University of Birmingham states that their aim is to explore 'opportunities for legal and *irregular* migration' (2015, emphasis added). Avoidance of the word 'illegal' risks obscuring the multiple barriers to 'legal' migration channels and the increased criminalisation of people without legal migration status (UK Parliament, 2016; UK Government, 2018a). The logic of denying reference to illegality is questioned by Bridget Anderson (2013), who criticises attempts to emphasise that migrants are 'NOT criminals, NOT benefit dependents, NOT sex workers, NOT single mothers'. As she continues, insistence that immigrants are not criminals carries:

> normative assumptions about both immigrants ('good guys') and criminals ('bad guys'). It implicitly claims that the migrant belongs in the community of value, in contrast to the criminal who does not. (2013, p.118)

Most importantly in terms of prospects for social change, Anderson argues that differentiating immigrants from what she calls 'failed citizens' or 'bad guys' creates unnecessary divisions. This may hinder recognition of intersectional commonalities and prospects for collective political contestation.

The concept of migration is reserved for international travel, premised on the assumed existence of a system of nation-states. At a rational level, states are little more than a means of organising representation and dividing responsibility. However, as Benedict Anderson (1983, p.55) argues, perceived commonality of identity associated with the 'imagined community' of a nation-state is such as to motivate people to die 'for their country'. This diverts attention from wider forms of oppression. As Holloway asks, 'How many times has the scream against oppression been diverted into the assertion of national identity?' (2002, p.73). Citizens' entitlement relative to 'outsiders' is fundamental to the construction of migration and shapes the experiences of disabled asylum seekers, as analysed in this study.

Determination to avoid repetition of atrocities of World War Two resulted in the 1951 Refugee Convention. Similar determination resulted in racism based on biological difference becoming increasingly taboo outside the political far right (Mondon and Winter, 2020). Legislation outlawing racial discrimination in Britain was introduced in 1965. This is not to argue that the post-war period was without racism or hostility to migrants. Instead, as Sivanandan (1990, p.65) argues, 'Racism does not stay still; it changes shape, size, contours, purpose, function'. Anti-racism legislation resulted in what Martin Barker (1981) refers to as 'new racism' avoiding legal repercussions. Rather than overt racism, Michael Billig (1991, pp.123-124) describes how policies became 'phrased in such a way that race is never mentioned. Other criteria are used, and it is, as if by magic, that these "fair-minded" criteria result in the exclusion of non-whites'. Opposition to immigration thus became couched in terms of cultural incompatibility and economic burden rather than skin colour or race. As Mondon (2015) explains, the claim became that 'it is not the "other" who is to blame, but its effect on "us" and "our" society'. This is the basis for successive governments' immigration policies. Without overtly challenging the 1951 Refugee Convention, these policies are predicated on a notion that immigrants, and particularly asylum seekers, are a 'burden' on citizens who have greater legitimacy (Traynor, 2015). Such an approach has a long history (Anderson, B.L., 2013; Goodfellow, 2019) but was made explicit by Theresa May's stated intention to create a sufficiently 'hostile environment' (Kirkup, 2012) such that migrants leave the UK. With this goal, the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts restricted access to services, including healthcare, housing, and banking (see for example Steele et al., 2014; Hiam, Steele and McKee, 2018; Liberty, 2018; Goodfellow, 2019). A separate 'crimmigration control system' (Bowling and Westenra, 2018) was established, distinct from the wider criminal justice system. The goal became explicitly to control migration, rather than to facilitate access to services.

The rationale for immigration policy may be clarified by exploring the rationale for Immigration Removal Centres, commonly known as detention centres (Welch and Schuster, 2005; Bosworth, 2008). The use, and therefore the cost, of detention for asylum seekers, as well as a wider category of people without legal migration status, has risen markedly (Silverman and Hajela, 2015). This increased use occurs despite wider public spending reductions, evidence showing the lack of impact on deterring migration (Flynn, 2016), and the detrimental impact of detention on physical and psychological health (Health Professionals Against Immigration Detention, 2016). As Tyler observes, despite multiple:

> reports about the degrading and inhumane treatment of migrants within private for-profit detention centres … the tenders granted to these companies by the government have continued to mushroom. (2013, p.94)

She concludes that immigration policy is designed not for welfare, or cost-saving, but that the 'marketisation of asylum created a precedent for the further outsourcing of … state accountable services' (ibid). If detention is a profitable element of what Rubén Hernández-León (2008) refers to as the 'migration industry', then the well-being of

detainees is irrelevant to its function. Furthermore, as Tyler (2013, p.94) expands, asylum seekers are used as 'experimental subjects in a programme of neoliberal economic reform'. Such reform may have been introduced through the immigration sector, however, as will be analysed in Chapter 4, there are many commonalities with more recent welfare reforms.

Hegemonic framing of immigration as problematic is not inevitable. Immigrants can be labelled as valuable sources of new skills and ideas, as people deserving sanctuary from the 'problem' of capitalism (Vickers, 2012), or as people with similar needs to any other human. Anderson (2013, p.69) explains that framing immigrants as burdensome serves to 'homogenise the migrant who is turned, literally into a figure'. As she continues, because of the 'normative content, like crime, immigration statistics have always been too high' (2013, p.9). The construction of immigration as inherently problematic, may be ubiquitous but such construction is not therefore inevitable.

In addition to legal instruments, immigration policy is visibly asserted through physical border control. Chris Bertram explains there is a distinction between territorial or 'perimeter' defences and internal 'social boundary' defences (2014, p.131). Access to resources may be controlled by the latter without the need for physical border controls. However, as Ruben Andersson (2014) argues, the uncontrolled movement of people is perceived as a threat to state control, irrespective of the numbers: physical border controls marking a country's territory may provide states with visible control but are ineffective controls on migration as greater numbers of people arrive by air. Such controls may not be intended to reduce the number of migrants, but to control *who* enters. Nicolas De Genova (2016) describes borders as filters. The function is to control who is worthy of entering. In a similar manner to discourse of disability, if contestation is focused on who should be included within conceptions of worth, this simply adjusts the borders of normality, but does not assert the commonalities of human need, or facilitate systemic contestation. This debate as to the effective focus for contestation of injustices associated with migration status is core to this study. Labels of migration status, like those of disability, are socially and politically constructed. The contingency of such labelling may not lessen its impact but does highlight the possibility of contestation.

Having discussed the construction of labels of disability and migration status, it is necessary to consider the construction of intersectional labelling.

1.4 The compound nature of intersectional oppression

Although not much academic study has focused on disability and migration, I build on a wider body of work on intersectionality. In their work focused on the experiences of black women, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) and Patricia Hill Collins (1990) explain that gender and race cannot be understood as 'mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis'. Intersectional oppression is not simply one form of oppression added to

another, but a compound experience. Building on their analyses, intersectional barriers associated with racism and migration status have been documented (see for example Vickers, Craig and Atkin, 2012), as have barriers associated with race, gender and impairment (Begum, 1994; Butt and Mirza, 1996; Daley, 2017). With particular relevance to this study, Sarah Woodin (2014, p.89) analyses intersectional experiences in the disabled people's movement, observing that 'black disabled people may be marginalised by the disabled people's movement due to racism and the anti-racist movement due to disablism'. Some citizens from black and minority ethnic groups have also experienced the additional pressures of the UK asylum system. Much of the analysis of different forms of intersectionality is equally applicable to disabled asylum seekers, who may experience oppression associated with racism, sexism, as well as migration status and disability.

For people experiencing intersectional oppression, labels may be an important tool of empowerment and resistance, facilitating collective organisation and means to assert existence within a wider movement. Hill Collins describes the need to define oneself and 'resist objectification as the Other' (1990, p.101) as core to Black feminist epistemology. She stresses the importance of safe spaces for the exclusive use of those with shared identity such as black women. She points out that 'such spaces would become less safe if shared by those who were not Black and female' (1990, p.110). These spaces provide peer support and facilitate collective organisation based on shared intersectional experiences. Safe spaces could play a similar role for disabled asylum seekers. In addition, many asylum seekers face the additional need for relief from the ever-present threat of detention and deportation. Peer support may be available through refugee community organisations or disabled people's organisations. However, as illustrated in the opening citation, a wheelchair-user explained to me that seeking asylum 'changes everything' and therefore reduces shared experiences with disabled citizens (2013). Intersectional barriers associated with impairment, language, and struggles for survival may be distinct from those faced by the broader community of either disabled citizens or asylum seekers. These barriers hinder the ability of disabled asylum seekers to find out about each other, to define themselves, or to come together in safe spaces.

With similarities to the co-option of the social model, the notion of intersectionality emanates from radical routes of black feminist activism but became increasingly adopted as a simile for more hegemonic concepts of diversity. It can then become a means to validate neoliberal capitalism by showing that people with diverse backgrounds are involved. As Myra Marx Ferree (2013) argues, intersectionality has moved from being 'a moment of resistance' to become an element of 'diversity', understood as a 'neoliberal approach to social inclusion'. If intersectionality is focused on the oppression of particular people within wider groups, the problem may appear as if located in group relations rather than the systemic exploitation inherent in capitalism. Sara Salem takes a similarly critical approach, explaining that:

> within studies of identity and identity politics, social identities are seen as intersecting and as reinforcing one another. However, this view does not often extend into an analysis of structural inequalities and power relations nor does it identify capitalism as the context in which these social identities are constituted. This is because identity is often theorized as result of 'diversity', as outside of, or pre-existing power. (2016, p.414)

Salem argues that the value of debates regarding intersectionality depends on the wider framework. Without interrogating overarching hegemonic assumptions of neoliberalism, intersectionality may become a tool to extend capitalism to ever-wider populations. However, Salem argues that intersectionality can be useful if embedded in an anti-racist, post-colonial framework and if it 'addresses relationships of power' (2016, p.415). These arguments extend to issues of disability and migration status. The appropriation of notions of intersectionality can be likened to attempts to include disabled people within the existing social order, or to modifications of the definition of 'normality' without contesting the exclusionary impact on those who remain defined as 'other'.

Developments of the disabled people's movement are highly relevant to the asylum sector. As Barnes (1996) writes, the politics of disablement is about 'challenging oppression in all its forms'. Yet, intersectional issues of disability and migration appear to be given little consideration among statutory and non-statutory stakeholders in either sector. An NGO employee explained to me in a previous project, the Home Office pay little consideration to experiences of disability in the asylum system. Furthermore, several employees in the asylum sector expressed confusion as to definitions of disability, frequently assuming that mental distress is a separate issue (2015b). The result is to confirm perceptions of disability as a minority concern. This is particularly significant in the context of high prevalence of mental distress among asylum seekers (Bhui et al., 2003; Turner et al., 2003; Warfa et al., 2006; Lawlor, Sher and Stateva, 2015; Giuntella et al., 2018). It is not new, or radical, to include mental health in definitions of disability. The UK Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines disability as a 'physical or *mental* impairment'. The UNCRPD (2006) includes those with 'physical, *mental,* intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'. The extent to which confused definitions matter, depends perhaps more on the practical response rather than on labels used. But if definitions shape entitlements, then appropriate definitions become fundamentally important.

1.5 Intersectional experiences of disability in the UK asylum system

There is a small body of work focused on the existence and marginalisation of disabled asylum seekers, on which I build. The study by Harris and Roberts (2001) was followed by research focusing on the London area (Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008). My initial work with disabled asylum seekers was as part of a study exploring the experiences of disabled people living in a wide range of circumstances (Yeo and Bolton, 2013). All these studies convey experiences of deprivation and injustice. If such inequalities were

caused by oversight, they might have been remedied in line with recommendations from previous studies. Yet, when I began these investigations the receptionist of a major NGO working with refugees stated that disabled asylum seekers do not exist (2015a). As Clara Straimer (2011, p.538) argues, invisibility is not due to people's absence, but 'due to the discrimination asylum seekers with disabilities are likely to face'. Some studies assume a causal association between minority status and marginalisation. Harris and Roberts (2004, p.13) provide a list of 25 'self-reported conditions/impairments', suggesting that for example less than 1% of disabled Somali migrants identify as having had a stroke. They conclude that the population of disabled asylum seekers is 'extremely diverse' and that 'this diversity contributes to the invisibility of disabled refugees and asylum seekers' (ibid). Yet I am unaware of any evidence that the medical conditions of UK citizens would be less diverse than those of asylum seekers. Taking a more international focus, Mary Crock, Christine Ernst and Ron McCallum (2012, p.736) also assume that barriers faced by disabled asylum seekers relate to a person's impairments. However, if these studies focused on the socially constructed barriers meeting human needs, then different conclusions might be reached. Applying Bacchi's (2009) analysis: the way a research problem is shaped, determines the methodology, the findings, and ultimately the policy recommendations.

Acknowledgement of the existence of disabled people in the asylum system has undoubtedly increased during the period of this investigation, with several initiatives directed at these issues, as will be discussed in Chapter 7. However, widespread avoidance of the word 'disabled', and the substitution with reference to people as 'vulnerable', conceals commonalities with the wider disabled people's movement and obscures the relevance of the UNCRPD (2006). The use of such euphemisms, therefore, requires further consideration.

Euphemisms of vulnerability

Labels of vulnerability have become frequent determinants of exceptional status associated with discretionary entitlement. Examples of such policies are discussed in Chapter 4, including the VPRS (2014); Shaw report (2016); and the Independent Chief Inspection on Borders and Immigration (2019). In addition, labels of vulnerability are used in wider UK discourse of welfare reform 'to highlight distinctions between people who deserve protection and those who do not' (Smith, K. and Waite, 2019, p.2289), creating what Kate Brown (2012, p.41) refers to as 'binary oppositions about the "deserving" and "undeserving"'. This discursive framing is not restricted to the UK. Ticktin's (2011, p.31) work with undocumented migrants in France found that notions of victimhood or vulnerability, particularly associated with sickness, facilitated access to support. As she explains, 'those who hope to be regularised must prove to be the exception – those who fit into the norm will remain undocumented' (ibid). In this context, to be labelled as 'vulnerable' is to be labelled as deserving. Similarly, the situation on the Greek refugee camp Moria is referred to by Daniel Howden and Metin Kodolak (2018) as a 'Vulnerability Contest'. They explain that 'the only way to escape Moria

while your claim is being processed is to be recognized as a “vulnerable” case’. Such recognition, and therefore a person’s survival, may depend on what Smith and Waite (2019, p.9) describe in relation to the UK context, as a need for vulnerability to be ‘performed’. Vulnerability becomes a means to mitigate the impact of some restrictions of immigration policy.

To label certain individuals as ‘vulnerable’ locates the problem at the level of the individual, obscuring systemic barriers and undermining the collective responsibility advocated by the social model. This label is not distinct to the migration context. Disabled activist and writer, Jenny Morris (2015) argues against such labelling in the wider disability context. Drawing on the work of Christian Lahusen and Maria Grasso (2018), a distinction is made between charitable support based on gifts, and solidarity, based on the political assertion of equal rights. Labels of vulnerability evoke one-sided charitable support, whereas solidarity builds a movement and can be reciprocated. Vulnerability is a euphemism for helpless, granting minor exemptions to neoliberal assumptions that individuals are architects of their own misfortune. State officials become cast as benevolent protectors of those deemed worthy, while relegating those not labelled as ‘vulnerable’ to the ranks of the undeserving. Yet, vulnerability is intrinsic to the human condition (Fineman and Grear, 2013; Yeo, R., 2019). Anybody prevented from meeting human needs is equally vulnerable.

Beyond the individualising of systemic problems, labels of ‘vulnerability’ affirm a moral regression towards Hobbesian sufficientarianism (see for example Frankfurt, 1987; Gosseries, 2011) whereby the goal is to reduce the risk of imminent death, rather than to enable equality. Such minimal objectives are affirmed by what Amy Shuman and Carol Bohmer (2016, p.21) refer to as ‘a discourse of rescue’ underpinning political asylum. Providing for the needs of people beyond citizens of the nation-state is framed as an act of benevolence, rather than an obligation or an issue of common humanity. Discourse of rescue and labels of vulnerability as determinants of entitlement to support are counter to the collective responsibility of the social model and the UNCRPD (2006), thereby separating asylum seekers from the potential mutual solidarity of the disabled people’s movement. Such representation is compounded by assumptions that entitlement depends on distinctions of human worth, drawing parallels with the more recent imposition of the biopsychosocial model of disability (Waddell and Aylward, 2009). The commonalities between euphemisms of disability in the asylum sector and wider welfare reform are investigated further in Chapter 4.

Potential contestation of gifts or rights

People labelled as ‘vulnerable’ may sometimes be framed as worthy of less restrictive conditions, albeit based on discretionary gifts rather than rights. The key distinction is that rights can be contested, whereas gifts cannot. Instead, unreciprocated gifts may become a form of social control (Schwartz, 1967). The 1951 Refugee Convention gave people the *right* to seek sanctuary from multiple forms of persecution. However, it is

not only in the context of disability that these rights have become diluted. As Fassin (2016) explains, 'whereas many European states once regarded asylum as a right, they now increasingly treat it as a favor'. He refers to the selection of refugees for resettlement in Australia, USA, and Canada as 'nothing less than a market of compassion'. The implication is that governments may *give* protection to people it chooses, rather than that people have the *right* to claim it.

Attempts to address individual examples of human rights abuse fail to address systemic injustice. In contrast to asylum seekers, Pakistani schoolgirl, Malala Yousafzai, was positively welcomed to the UK after being shot and injured while campaigning for girls' education (Yousafzai and McCormick, 2014). Providing for the needs of certain victims of human rights abuses may stem from what O'Dwyer refers to as the 'cult of the hero' (1980). Saumel Moyn's analysis (2014) highlights that human rights abuses are integral to neoliberal inequalities, yet as Robert Meister (2011, p.31) argues, to focus on these abuses rather than systemic injustice may relieve the conscience of people benefitting from the current social order without contesting ongoing inequalities. This situation is not unique to issues of migration. Referring to broader humanitarian response, Michael Maren (2002) argues that priorities are shaped by the needs of donors rather than recipients. Support for selected individuals may be motivated by the need to do something tangible. A fundraising appeal by Help Refugees (2016) to support migrants in Dunkirk counterposes the complexity of arguments regarding migration, with the simplicity of the need for 'support to fellow human beings'. Providing for selected people is thereby framed as beyond politics. This approach may provide immediate support through which greater awareness of systemic injustice may be achieved; however, such framing of the problem does not contest causal injustice.

In contrast to those people considered exceptional and worthy of philanthropic gifts, disabled asylum seekers, particularly those whose asylum claims have been rejected, face a struggle for basic survival. At this point, people might be described as having what Giorgio Agamben (1998) refers to as 'homo sacer', or having 'bare lives'. There is, however, some difference of opinion among academics as to the potential power of those who, according to Arendt (1951) have lost everything. According to her, it is only at such times that the focus turns to human rights. However, as Butler (2014) explains, the absence of legal protection associated with a 'bare life' does not necessarily constitute lack of political agency. Hunger strikes, naked protests, and lip sewing (see for example Fiske, 2016) have all been used to deliberately evoke vulnerability, or what disability scholar Rob McRuer (2017) refers to as 'a tender site of resistance' used to contest denial of access to human needs. For people with no rights, such methods may be a means to assert their power. As Rancière explains (1999, p.11), 'the struggle between the rich and the poor is not social reality, which politics then has to deal with. It is the actual institution of politics itself'. Lack of rights may be conceived not as a cause for benevolent charity but as a call for mobilisation with the potential for political transformation. However, as I will explain in my final analysis, rights to access existing services do not automatically create equality.

Discursive distinctions between gifts and rights appear central to the restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees. If a social model perspective were applied to asylum seekers, interventions could focus on the removal of systemic barriers. However, labels of individual vulnerability frame the issue as one of discretionary support to those deemed worthy, thereby reverting to discourse reminiscent of the charity model. As such, intersectional discourse of disability and migration has the potential to transform debate in progressive or regressive directions. This highlights the contingency of current restrictions and inequalities.

1.6 The contingency of current inequalities and alternatives

This chapter began by exploring hegemonic conceptions of normality, arguing that the current social order is maintained by common-sense assumptions of inevitability. However, attitudinal change alone would not address causal inequalities. As Sivanandan (1990, p.65) writes:

> people's attitudes don't mean a damn to me ... the acting out of prejudice is discrimination and when it becomes institutionalised in the power structure of this society, then we are dealing not with attitudes, but with power.

Attitudes may not 'mean a damn' in themselves, however, awareness of the contingency of the existing situation is an essential precursor for effective contestation of power.

Analysis of contingency is central to the capacity for change. As Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.79) argue, 'the hegemony that defines disability in capitalist societies' is constituted by 'individualism … medicalisation, normality', with the core assumption that 'able-bodied/mindedness' is "normal"' (2012, p.88). If 'able-bodied/mindedness' is portrayed as normal within the 'imagined community' of the nation-state (Anderson, B., 1983), then migrants and disabled people become the intrinsically problematic 'other'. This provides the implicit justification for inequalities of entitlement between the 'other' and the 'norm'. Access barriers become assumed to result from an individual's 'special needs', rather than from ableist structures (Campbell, 2012). Similarly, migrant disadvantage becomes framed as inevitable, obscuring the contingency of the nation-state and its right to defend internal and external borders. Goodfellow writes:

> borders seem as natural as day and night; firming up territories by demarcating where the nation-state begins and ends. We tend to treat them as if they've always been there and always will be. But borders are created and recreated. (2019, p.35)

Borders, like other elements of the social order, are the result of what Mouffe (2007, p.2) refers to as 'sedimented hegemonic practices'. When something is presented as if natural, or common-sense, then contestation is hindered. Awareness of contingency assists in the recognition of alternative means of organising society and distributing resources. As Mouffe also explains:

> Things could always be otherwise and therefore every order is predicated on the exclusion of other possibilities. It is in that sense that it can be called 'political' since it is the expression of a particular structure of power relations. (2005b, p.17)

When one way of framing a problem becomes dominant, it indicates that alternatives are marginalised, not that they do not exist.

If the existing social order is unjust, then it is necessary to understand how it can be contested. As such, I investigate what underpins current relations, with the objective of facilitating contestation. This approach is likened to the stated purpose of Tyler's (2013, p.4) book 'Revolting Subjects': 'to induce revulsion about the forms of disenfranchisement it describes, as well as to provoke the desire to do something about it'. More specifically related to disability, Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.1), describe the objective of their book as a contribution to the struggle to replace capitalism. The injustice of the current system may be exemplified by the experiences of disabled asylum seekers but there are many other manifestations. Reduced public funding, together with neoliberal dislocation of the rights and collective responsibility on which the welfare state was founded, result in increased inequality for the wider population (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010; Dorling, 2014). This highlights the inevitable contingency of any social order, including the injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers.

The challenge is to determine, not *whether*, but *how* progressive change can be realised. Although there is not a large body of literature specific to addressing intersectional injustices of disability and migration, there is more substantial work regarding wider issues of minority rights.

Normative conceptions of minority: majority relations

In addition to awareness of contingency, effective contestation requires a vision of alternative. Academic analysis of minority / majority relations brings important insight to this study. The UPIAS (1976) goal of 'participation in society' implies that society is a static entity with the options limited to binary choices of inclusion or exclusion. The denial of disabled people's rights is generally referred to as marginalisation or 'exclusion', with the solution posited as 'inclusion' (see for example Oliver and Barnes, 1998). The Alliance for Inclusive Education (Allfie) advocate inclusion, which they define as 'a commitment to removing all barriers to the full participation of everyone as equally valued and unique individuals' (2016). This is distinct from integration, defined as attempts to get disabled people to 'fit in with pre-existing structures, attitudes, and an unaltered environment' (ibid). Despite Allfie's definition, notions of inclusion do not *automatically* bestow equality. Indeed, Ruth Lister argues that goals of 'social inclusion' form part of a paradigm shift from goals of equality (1998, p.215). The binary opposition of discourse regarding inclusion and exclusion obscures disadvantageous forms of inclusion. Referring particularly to issues of international development, Sam Hickey and Andries du Toit (2007) warn of the dangers of adverse incorporation whereby people can be included in disadvantageous circumstances.

The notion of integration is commonly presented as an objective of successful immigration policy (see for example Lessard-Phillips and Galandini, 2015) despite having been widely discredited in the context of disability. Normative assumptions of integration do not extend equally to all social groups. Social theorist, Willem Schinkel (2013, p.1156) argues that there is a distinction 'between those for whom integration is an issue at all and those for whom it is not'. According to Melinda McPherson (2010, p.546), the concept of integration assumes that migrants are 'innately problematic' and that 'conformance by outsiders with a normative, universal, and static national citizen subject will facilitate social cohesion'. Furthermore, normative pressure for immigrants to integrate is incompatible with the deliberate exclusion of the asylum process (Bakker, Cheung and Phillimore, 2016). The UK Cabinet Office established the Social Exclusion Unit to tackle problems stemming from 'unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing' (1998). Yet, these factors are systematically imposed on asylum seekers. Bakker et al. provide 'empirical evidence of negative associations between asylum support systems and … mental and physical health' (2016, p.1). If people are granted leave to remain or refugee status, then more 'inclusive integration goals' (2016, p.2) may be implemented, although Rosemary Sales (2002) describes even these as 'limited, uneven and dependent on voluntary initiative'. The conjoining of 'inclusive integration' suggests confusion as to the distinction. Immigration policy explicitly denies the 'equal value' of asylum seekers necessitated by Allfie's (2016) definition of inclusion.

The potential for integration is questioned by philosopher Arendt in her famous essay, 'We Refugees', written in 1943 shortly after fleeing Nazi Germany and arriving in the USA. She recalls seeking to counter the 'human truth' that a refugee is somebody who has lost everything:

> once we were somebodies about whom people cared; we were loved by our friends … once we could buy our food and ride in the subway without being told we are undesirable. (1964, p.115)

Her quest is to regain this sense of belonging. She explains that the struggle to integrate is the struggle 'to avoid anyone guessing who we are, what kind of passport we have'. Similarly, a refugee community organisation 'Borderlands', based in Bristol calls for a move 'from exclusion' not to inclusion or integration but 'to belonging' (https://www.borderlands.uk.com). Unlike notions of integration, belonging does not imply a superiority of the host community. Normative notions of integration imply that newcomers can, and should, become like the host community. As Bauman (2012) argues, 'If you want to be a French citizen you have to become a Frenchman in your behaviour, your language, the way you act, your ideas'. The notion that newcomers should become 'integrated' or 'included' implies that the host population is a homogenous and benign entity. As I argue in a previous study, the 'agenda into which inclusion is sought is rarely questioned' (2006, p.74). The extent of contingency is obscured by an assumed exclusion: inclusion binary. As Schinkel explains:

> This discourse demarcates the boundaries of society by rendering objectively observable the non-integrated who are considered to reside 'outside society'. The image of society thereby produced is that of a morally cleansed realm: social problems are relegated to the domain 'outside society', consisting of persons in need of integration. (2013, p.1142)

A focus on integration or inclusion risks demarcating whole groups as unintegrated or excluded by not subscribing to the dominant values ascribed to the host community.

Distinctions in the discourse of disability and migration extend to the contrasting focus of scholarly contestation of ableism and racism. In the fight against racism, the 'mainstreaming of the far right' (Mondon and Winter, 2018) is presented as a negative phenomenon to be resisted. The focus is on preventing the legitimisation of racism. In contrast, in the fight against disability discrimination, the goal is to 'mainstream disability' (Albert, 2006). The ultimate objectives of resisting oppression are not dissimilar, yet disability discrimination is assumed to be ubiquitous, with the goal to overcome it such that disabled people gain access to mainstream services. In contrast, the far right and racism, are assumed to be threats to be kept out of mainstream society. The key distinction thereby lies with the extent to which oppressive barriers are assumed to be already within the mainstream.

Overt rejection of ableism remains less pervasive than that of racism. The targeting of disabled people by Nazi Germany (Crow, 2009) did not lead to hegemonic rejection of ableism. The 1951 Refugee Convention was adopted 55 years before the UNCRPD (2006). Racism may be hegemonically represented as reduced to individual illiberal acts of what Tim Wise (2009, p.9) refers to as 'old-fashioned bigotry', from which a liberal mainstream can distance itself. In contrast, the barriers faced by disabled people may appear less monstrous, hegemonically perceived as tragic but inevitable. Notwithstanding the contingency of what is assumed to be politically achievable, the dichotomous framing of contestation regarding racism and ableism may hinder the building of intersectional resistance.

Underpinning normative assumptions of integration, inclusion or disability mainstreaming are wider notions of pragmatism and assumed consensus, or quests for wider systemic change. Rancière writes of the way:

> consensus thinking conveniently represents what it calls "exclusion" in the simple relationship between an inside and an outside. But what is at stake under the name of exclusion is not being-outside. It is the mode of division according to which an inside and an outside can be joined. (1999, p.115)

He further criticises consensus as resulting in 'politics becoming a technical issue of finding the centre ground, rather than a forum for debate, disagreement and contesting oppression' (1999, p.124). Similarly, Mouffe (2005b, p.19) questions normative goals of consensus, which she argues obscure political antagonisms, implying that a 'general interest of the people' exists. This results in 'the maintenance of existing hierarchies' (ibid). Such questions of strategic priority are core to developing effective contestation.

The debate between what are perceived as pragmatic, achievable adjustments and, quests for systemic change are long-running. In 1899, Rosa Luxemburg presented what she saw as the choice between 'social reform or revolution' (Scott, 2010). With more contemporary focus, Holloway (2002, p.74) criticises the liberal temptation to focus on 'particular issues or particular identities: struggles which aim at rearrangement but not an overcoming of power relations'. More specifically in her study of disability in the context of the liberal state, Jasbir Puar (2017, p.15) cites Mia Mingus who observes that discussion is dominated by questions of 'How do we get disabled people access to the current system? Rather than thinking that the entire 'table' or 'system' might need to change'. As Finkelstein (2007, p.5) explains, 'We cannot understand or deal with disability without dealing with the essential nature of society itself.' The asylum system provides particularly clear evidence of the problematic nature of seeking pragmatic inclusion within the existing system. The negative impact of immigration detention, for example, is not limited to issues of disability access (Shaw, 2016). If, as argued by many theorists (Holloway, 2002; Klein, 2002; Bauman, 2004; Giroux, 2008), the restrictions and inequalities experienced by marginalised groups are a consequence, not an oversight, of the current system, then the solution cannot be integration, incorporation or even inclusion in the current system. Holloway criticises those who try to 'smother our scream' by asking questions like, 'Do we not understand the complexity of the world, the practical difficulties of implementing radical change?' (2002, p.3). There is a need, as Badiou (2015) argues in a lecture, to 'go outside the cave of capitalism' or as Giroux (2008, p.609) writes, to 'reveal neoliberalism as a historical and social construction'. He argues that the systemic causes of lived experiences need to be exposed to build collective response and 'new narratives about what is possible' (2008, p.614). To achieve the necessary change requires building awareness of contingency and the potential for alternative forms of social organisation.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the key literature on which the study draws. Assuming that there are infinite ways in which a social order could be structured and that the injustices faced by disabled asylum seekers are not inevitable, I began by exploring Gramscian principles of hegemony (Simon, 1982; Thomas, 2010; Crehan, 2016). Gramsci provides insights as to how the assumptions and needs of the dominant class shape the common-sense on which the social order is built. Drawing on this literature, I argued that dominant distinctions, between the entitlement of those construed as 'normal' and those construed as 'other', stem from the prioritisation of economic contribution within a capitalist economy. These principles of hegemony facilitate understanding of the lack of support for people with impairments that limit productivity, or who arrive in the UK seeking sanctuary rather than contributing resources. People who meet both categorisations of difference become particularly disadvantaged. Literature regarding hegemony and common-sense therefore underpins this study's

analysis of the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers in the UK.

The chapter then reviewed more specific literature regarding constructions of disability, migration status, and intersectionality. The study is particularly indebted to the small body of literature which brought academic attention to the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers in the UK (Harris and Roberts, 2001; Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008; Straimer, 2011). However, these intersectional experiences must be understood in the context of wider bodies of literature regarding the social construction of distinctions of entitlement associated with disability and forced migration.

With the quest to consider how the current situation could be otherwise, the chapter turned to poststructuralist literature focused on understanding the contingency of the social order (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 2005a). This serves to highlight the possibility of alternatives. When considering the scale of injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers, it may appear difficult to conceive realistic alternatives. However, as Holloway explains:

> the openness of uncertainty is central to revolution ... We ask, not only because we do not know the way (we do not), but also because asking the way is part of the revolutionary process. (2002, p.215)

This research builds on these previous bodies of work, investigating what underpins current inequalities and how effective contestation could be realised. Before considering the research design in detail, the theoretical framework underpinning this study requires more in-depth consideration.

Chapter 2. The theoretical framework: the power of discursive representation to maintain or contest the social order.

> *all social theory must be judged on three inter-related elements: its adequacy in describing experience; its ability to explain experience; and finally, its potential to transform experience.*
>
> (Oliver, 1999)

Having reviewed key academic literature regarding the construction and contingency of hegemonic conceptions of disability, migration, and intersectionality, I now turn to consider a suitable theoretical framework for this study.

All actions are underpinned by theoretical assumptions regarding current reality and perceptions of possibility. Some assumptions gain the power of hegemony and thereby appear the natural way of ordering the world. Effective contestation of any element of the existing social order, therefore, relies on understanding these assumptions. Similarly, the way a research problem is understood, shapes the methodology that is used, the evidence that is found, and the conclusions that are drawn. This research seeks to contribute to addressing the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers. The success of this goal relies on a theoretical framework which facilitates understanding of what underpins current injustice and how it could be contested. It is, therefore, important to interrogate the theoretical basis of this study from the outset.

This chapter introduces the broad epistemological and ontological framework adopted in this study. The rationale for this positioning is considered before focusing on the more specific application to issues of disability and forced migration. The study builds on the work of disability activists and academics, particularly Oliver and Barnes (2012), and Clifford (2020). However, unlike their historical materialist perspective of disability, I take a poststructuralist approach, assuming that the social order is not only explained, but also constituted, by discursive representations, and that it is inherently contingent. This conception of discourse is based on the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985; 1987), together with the Essex school of discourse theory. I particularly draw on elements of the work of Glynos and Howarth (2007), who argue that 'all practices and regimes are discursive entities'. If the structures of the social order are mediated by discursive representations, then effective contestation requires analysis of what these representations are and the impact which they have.

The nature, implications and application of this theoretical framework are discussed, before turning to the wider methodological design in the next chapter.

2.1 Developing understanding of the 'problem' associated with disability and forced migration

The impact of common-sense assumptions on lived experience is an issue of debate among social and political theorists. French social theorist, Michel Foucault (1998) builds on Gramsci's conception of hegemony, arguing that emancipatory social change relies on contesting the dominant narrative, which is itself the result of continuous discursive struggles. He argues that contemporary liberal democracy is governed increasingly by what he terms 'biopower' (1998, p.140). Without the overt punishment associated with repressive power, this form of power may be invisible but causes people to modify their behaviour according to the hegemonic norms of the dominant social class (Foucault, 1979; Oksala, 2015). The notion of hegemony is further developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) who stress that radical political change relies on awareness, contestation, and replacement of the hegemonic basis of common-sense. In contrast to Gramsci and Foucault who assume a distinction between discourse and physical reality, Laclau and Mouffe argue that these are inextricably intertwined. There can be no understanding of reality independent of discursive representation.

Theoretical assumptions shape how a problem is understood and the solutions which appear appropriate. Returning to Bacchi (2009, 2012), policy analysis relies on understanding what problem the policy seeks to address. If the problems experienced by disabled asylum seekers are framed as exclusion resulting from oversight rather than deliberate policy, then the solution may appear to be inclusion, framed as what Mouffe refers to as 'technical issues to be solved by experts' (2005b, p.10). Awareness of contingency and the existence of conflicting possibilities is essential to effective debate of political alternatives. Political is used here to mean 'the contestation and institution of social relations and practices' (Howarth, D., Glynos and Griggs, 2016, p.100). The power of hegemony lies not only in promoting the values of the ruling class as if they were common-sense but, as Ralph Miliband (1994, p.11) asserts, also contesting the idea that 'there is no alternative'. As he explains, 'Hegemony depends not so much on consent as on resignation'. The 'problem', conceived in this study, is, therefore, not how to include people in the existing asylum system, but to understand what underpins a 'particular structure of power relations' (Mouffe, 2005b, p.17), and how it could be contested.

As explained in the previous chapter, taking a social model perspective, as developed by Oliver (1983), I assume that disability results from socially constructed barriers. Furthermore, I accept Oliver's assertion that disability is produced by the prioritisation of economic contribution in capitalist society (1999, p.2). As such, he and Colin Barnes (2012, p.5) conclude that 'only the transformation of capitalist society will ensure the full inclusion of disabled people and indeed all socially oppressed groups'. With a similar motivation, but different approach, I take a poststructuralist perspective to

explore the hegemonic assumptions and structures underpinning current inequalities, and to investigate how these could be contested.

Assuming the inherent contingency of any social order as discussed in Chapter 1, this study predicates discussion of existing discursive struggles, as essential to contestation of hegemonic hierarchies of entitlement. Differences in the legal entitlements of disabled people seeking asylum (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999 Part VI) and those selected for the VPRS (2014) suggest that the disadvantage is not solely based on disability, forced migration, or minority status. Differences in informal public support may reflect, reinforce, or contest differences in formal entitlements.

Without underestimating the immediacy of material and social deprivation it is necessary to question whether the inclusion of disabled asylum seekers would be an adequate response. When the scope of political imagination becomes limited to binary options of exclusion or inclusion within a system of restrictions, explicitly designed to create a 'hostile environment' (Goodfellow, 2019), then reframing the problem becomes fundamentally important. To ask *why* the entitlements of disabled asylum are lower than those of citizens would have greater counter-hegemonic value. It is necessary to interrogate conceptions of the problem and the resultant solutions. As Bacchi (2012, p.5) asks, 'what forms of governing practice…are enabled' if the 'problem' is hegemonically framed as poverty, rather than inequality or wealth for example? Representing the problem as poverty or exclusion, risks locating the problem among the marginalised, obscuring systemic inequalities and possible alternatives.

Theoretical assumptions are core to the maintenance, or contestation, of systemic inequalities. As Sutton and Staw (1995, p.378) explain, theory 'delves into underlying processes so as to understand the systematic reasons for a particular occurrence or non-occurrence'. This study seeks to understand the roots of current inequalities and to contribute towards creating a more just system. These combined objectives distinguish research from a campaign. However, the distinctions are not absolute. Alberto Melucci (1996, p.390) argues that 'social research needs to discard the illusion that it in some way mirrors 'true' reality and move closer to a recognition … that it is a social activity'. Irrespective of intention, research, like any social activity, impacts on the social world. Aspirations that research contributes to change could become problematic if contradictory findings were ignored or the form of change were predetermined and imposed on research subjects. This study therefore takes a retroductive (Glynos and Howarth, 2019) approach in which hypotheses are developed, adapted or rejected as the study develops.

Before considering the specific details of this research, it is essential to understand the epistemological and ontological assumptions on which this study is grounded.

2.2 The social construction and contingency of reality

The study is rooted in a social constructivist epistemological approach (see for example Berger and Luckmann, 1967), whereby it is assumed that perceptions of social reality are shaped by people's lived experiences, subject positions and relationships. As explained by Alfred Schütz:

> the world of nature as explored by the natural scientist does not "mean" anything to molecules… But the observational field of the social scientist – social reality – has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the beings living, acting, and thinking within it. By a series of common-sense constructs, they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world, which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. (1967, p.59)

Those responsible for shaping and implementing organisational systems, replicate and reinforce their 'common-sense constructs' through the way they 'pre-select' and 'pre-interpret' the world and their lives within it. The approach taken by social researchers is, as Norman Fairclough (1989, p.5) argues, inevitably influenced 'by their own social experiences and values and political commitments'. According to Schütz (1967) and Fairclough (1989), subjectivity of understanding and action is inevitable. This study assumes that perceptions of the world are shaped by personal experiences and access to information, which also influence behaviour, thereby simultaneously contributing to creating the world. More specifically, inequality of entitlement is implemented through organisational systems which are continually replicated and reinforced, such that the subjective assumptions on which the system is based are obscured along with perceptions of alternatives. Subjectivity is inevitable, but power inequalities determining *which* perspectives shape the world, are contingent. As Margaret Wetherell (2001, p.384) argues, discourse is 'always interpretive, always contingent, always a version or a reading from some theoretical, epistemological or ethical standpoint'. She espouses the view that there is no 'universal truth' (ibid). Similarly, I base this study on the understanding that change is possible because any social order is inherently contingent.

In relation to the social change ambitions of this work, the wider ontological approach also needs clarification. Taking a critical realist perspective, Roy Bhaskar explains:

> we will only be able to understand - and so change - the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses … These structures are not spontaneously apparent in the observable pattern of events; they can only be identified through the practical and theoretical work. (1989, p.2)

I share Bhaskar's ambition to understand and change the social world. However, unlike him, I adopt a poststructuralist approach and question the existence of an independent reality. As Linda Graham (2005) writes, poststructuralism eschews 'claims to objectivity and truth'. Instead, perceptions of 'reality' and possibility are understood as contingent on wider experiences and power relations. These perceptions shape a person's actions and thereby also influence the wider social order. The goal, as Glynos and

Howarth (2007, p.5) explain, is ‘to conceptualise the character and transformation of social structures, and to clarify the relationship between social structures, political agency and power’. More specifically, this approach explores the ‘reproduction and transformation of hegemonic orders and practices’ (ibid). This theoretical framework is predicated on the inherent incompleteness of all social relations. If the social order is shaped by the current balance of intersecting relations and assumptions, then multiple alternatives are possible. Glynos et al. (2009, p.10) explain, ‘objects of discourse are radically contingent constructs… they can be interpreted and understood in many different ways’. This radical contingency is core to this study’s objective to contribute to the development of alternatives to current restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration.

The meaning of poststructuralism and its application to discourse theory requires deeper exploration before considering the practical relevance of these theoretical positions to the entitlements of disabled migrants.

2.3 Investigating the disputed nature of discourse

Different approaches to discourse analysis are rooted in different academic paradigms. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach, based on critical realism, distinguishing between discursive and non-discursive observations. A physical entity such as a school building may be considered non-discursive, whereas the teaching within it is considered discourse. The power imbalance as to who shapes and consumes public discourse is perceived as vitally significant to this approach. As Teun Van Dijk (1993, p.9) explains ‘ordinary people are more or less passive participants in the many discourse types and communicative events controlled by the elites’. Discourse is thereby perceived as a descriptor rather than a determinant of power relations. With the aim of describing an external reality, Fairclough (2003) established methods of CDA composed of detailed analysis of text and language.

In contrast to the critical realism on which CDA is based, poststructuralism assumes that discourse not only describes the current situation but is instrumental in the ‘*production* of 'truth' and 'knowledge'' (Ball, 2006). As Foucault (1989, p.49) explains, discourses ‘do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so, conceal their own invention’. He argues that any discourse must be understood in the context of the struggles from which it has developed. Foucault avoids referring to this analysis as history, which according to him would assume a linear and rational development of ideas. Instead, he refers to a genealogy or ‘archaeology of knowledge’ (1989). Discourse is never static. It builds on previous ideas with a continuous flow of new activity and understanding, just as the physical structure of the earth builds on sedimented layers. However, like proponents of CDA, Foucault distinguishes between discursive and non-discursive properties of social reality. In contrast, this study assumes that all perceptions of the world are always, and inevitably, discursively situated.

2.4 Poststructuralist Discourse Theory

Poststructuralist discourse theory differs from CDA primarily in relation to the ontological understanding of the scope and influence of discourse. Laclau and Mouffe (1985, p.108) argue that discourse shapes the *totality* of social reality, that 'every object is constituted as an object of discourse'. Implicitly referring to Foucauldian notions of the 'archaeology of knowledge' (1989), Glynos and Howarth describe the logics of critical explanation as:

> a process of archaeological bracketing that seeks to identify domain objects and practices in need of analysis and critique, before then providing a genealogical accounting that explains their political and ideological emergence. (2007, p.170)

Unlike Foucault's reference to archaeology, the social order is not understood as composed of historically sedimented and incontestable layers. Instead, discursive struggles, from which policy emerges, are assumed to be characterised by radical contingency. Ongoing struggles construct the limits, 'constituting the formation' of the social order (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.145). Their approach combines Gramsci's focus on hegemony with poststructuralist theory of contingency, whereby the constitutive function of discourse makes contestation core to social change. Poststructuralist discourse theory does not deny the physical existence of objects, however, as Glynos and Howarth explain, 'the fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought or with the realism/idealism opposition' (2007, p.17). By way of example, Howarth and Yannis Stavrakakis (2000) explain the impact of different discursive understanding of a forest, which:

> may simply represent an inconvenient obstacle impeding the rapid implementation of a new road system or might be viewed as a site of special interest to scientists and naturalists, or symbol of the nation's threatened national heritage … its meaning depends on the orders of discourse that constitute its identity and significance. (2000, p.3)

Representation of a forest as a symbol of national heritage results in different action compared with conceptions of it as an obstacle. It is because an object exists that it can be conceptualised in different ways, but our actions necessarily depend on our perceptions. Laclau and Mouffe (1987, p.85) observe that:

> as a member of a certain community, I will never encounter the object in its naked existence - such a notion is a mere abstraction; rather, that existence will always be given as articulated within discursive totalities.

Different political actors may attempt to define and 'fix the identities of objects and practices in a particular way' (Howarth, D.R., Norval and Stavrakakis, 2000, p.3). Furthermore, as Laclau and Mouffe (1987, p.105) explain, dominant social actors seek to articulate a new idea or element within previous discursive representations to avoid dislocation. However, no representation is ever fixed or complete. They describe how 'in our interchange with the world, objects are never given to us as mere existential

entities; they are always given to us within discursive articulations' (1987, p.85). As such, discursive representations determine people's rights, opportunities, and distinctions of entitlement. This is summarised by Glynos and Howarth:

> ontology is not just about what sort of things exist, but that they exist and how they exist … this perspective enables us to highlight the constructed and political character of social objectivity. (2007, p.11)

With this conception, discursive challenge is essential to social and political change.

The Essex school of discourse theory is a multifaceted approach with less prescriptive analytical methods but greater focus on contingency than CDA. The logics approach to critical explanation (Glynos and Howarth, 2007) is used in this study to investigate the discursive struggles shaping inequalities of entitlement. This exposes the forms of contestation required to address current restrictions.

Logics approach

My analysis focuses on the interrelated social, political and fantasmatic logics shaping policy and practice (Glynos and Howarth, 2007). This approach provides what Glynos (2008, p.277) describes as 'a language with which to characterize and critically explain the existence, maintenance, and transformation of concrete practices', premised on the inherent radical contingency of any social order. In broad terms: social logics form the core, often unquestioned, basis of *what* constitutes social practice; political logics explain *how* social practices are instituted or transformed; fantasmatic logics explain *why* practices are, or are not, contested accounting 'for the way particular practices and regimes 'grip' subjects' (Howarth, D., Glynos and Griggs, 2016, p.101). Any social practice is comprised of all three relational components. It is important to stress that these logics may be perceived differently by people with different subject positions and may change over time. As will be explained in Chapter 3, I seek input from people with diverse subject positions to gain multiple perspectives. However, my analysis is inevitably shaped by my perceptions.

The discursive distinctions between social, political and fantasmatic logics require further analysis before examining the relevance to this study.

Social logics

Social logics are the uncontested assumptions, or 'the rules and norms of a practice or regime' (Howarth, D., Glynos and Griggs, 2016, p.101). These logics can be understood as the 'horizon within which some objects are representable, and others are excluded' (Mouffe, 2005b, p.117). These logics may appear inevitable to those who are bound by them, and may gain the status of what Gramsci terms 'common-sense' (Crehan, 2016). It is necessary to make social logics explicit if they are to be contested. Yet, as researchers are usually bound by the same norms as others in the same society, it may be hard to discern these norms from the natural state of society. The perspectives of people with different subject positions may facilitate understanding

of the social logics underpinning current assumptions. In the current social order characterised by capitalism, the need for profit maximisation can be considered a core social logic. This results in common-sense assumptions that the restricted entitlements associated with disability and forced migration are inevitable. This logic may relate to formal legal entitlements, as well as to informal assumptions of legitimacy and status, determining community support. If such logics are made overt, then their contingency and therefore contestability becomes more apparent.

Political logics

Political logics are the means by which social practices are 'instituted, contested and defended' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.133). These logics form the focus of the overt 'conflicts and contestations' (Glynos, 2008, p.277) shaping public discursive explanation. They may prelimit the agenda for debate, to the exclusion of consideration of the foundational common-sense or social logics. Political logics may be understood as protecting us from a perceived threat to what are framed as incontestable norms on which the social order relies. For example, hegemonic political debate regarding immigration controls assumes the need to control or restrict numbers, thereby focusing debate on the characteristics of people to be allowed to enter the UK, leaving the assumed primacy of the nation-state uncontested.

Fantasmatic logics

Fantasmatic logics form the third component of the logics approach. These logics complement wider logics, making political logics appear 'compelling' and social logics appear 'natural' (Glynos, Klimecki and Willmott, 2012, p.299), thereby 'covering over the radical contingency of social relations' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.134). As Glynos (2001), p.199) argues, fantasy 'accounts for the resistance encountered in making this contingency visible'. These logics draw on Lacanian psychoanalytical notions of an unattainable quest for the enjoyment that would derive from completeness. They result from the sense that something must be sought which is 'always-already lost' (2008, p.261). Nostalgia for an 'imagined golden age' (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008, p.262) of enjoyment is readily associated with blame:

> The identity of the evil ''Other'' who prevents the nation from recouping the enjoyment it has lost, shifts as a function of historical context. It may be a foreign occupier … immigrants ''who steal our jobs''… the obstacle to full enjoyment shifts depending on the specificity of the fantasmatic narrative at stake, but the formal logic remains the same. The important point is that fantasy fosters the solidarity of the national community, consolidates national identity, and animates national desire.

According to Glynos and Howarth (2007, p.107), this psychological need accounts for 'the resilience of a host of practices and rituals'. Most significant to this study, notions of collective national identity are based on fantasmatic logics of togetherness, shared goals and potentially also a common enemy, irrespective of the actual diversity and inequalities within a nation-state. Cultural theorist Slavoj Žižek argues that:

> a nation exists only as long as its specific enjoyment continues to be materialised in a set of social practices and transmitted through national myths or fantasies that secure these practices. (1993, p.202)

Such fantasmatic, normative notions of national unity relate to Anderson's (1983) conception of an 'imagined community', enabling the lower entitlements associated with migration status compared with citizens. As Žižek explains:

> what is at stake in ethnic tensions is always the possession of the national Thing: the "other" wants to steal our enjoyment (by ruining our "way of life") and/or it has access to some secret, perverse enjoyment. In short, what … bothers us about the "other", is the peculiar way he organises his enjoyment... In the racist perspective, the "other" is either a workaholic stealing our jobs or an idler living on our labour. The basic paradox is that our Thing is conceived as something inaccessible to the other and at the same time threatened by him. (1991, p.165)

The objective basis of a threat to social logics is not as significant as the perception, which according to Glynos, Speed and West (2014, p.4) depends on the 'capacity to mobilise affective attachments', associated with fantasmatic logics. In July 2015, then UK Prime Minister David Cameron referred to people seeking sanctuary in the UK as 'swarms of people' (BBC Cameron, 2015a), thereby suggesting equivalence with destructive insects. The precise *nature* of the implied threat or *which* norms would be at risk are not explicit, nor could they be, as the comparison is manifestly fantasy. The discourse serves to evoke emotional reactions, legitimising political action to secure what are implicitly framed as common-sense social norms.

Fantasies of national unity may be used to justify excluding the 'other'. However, this representation is inherently contingent. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, even within the confines of dominant social logics, the superiority of 'our' group may be affirmed by pride in 'our' generosity or by the need for defence against the perceived threat of the 'other'. In contrast, perceptions of equality of entitlement to meet universal human need would build solidarity across borders, contesting common-sense assumptions of the nation-state and associated fantasies of pride.

Logics of equivalence and difference

No discursive logic exists in isolation. Logics of equivalence and difference (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.145) locate any discourse in relation to wider representation. These may highlight or obscure perceptions of possibility. The lack of significant transformation of the banking sector following the 2008 financial crash is, according to Glynos et al. (2012, p.313), because 'fantasmatic and political logics have operated to impede such reform by marginalizing alternative diagnoses and visions'. Discursive representation of the problems associated with disability and forced migration may foreground opposing targets for contestation or may frame the problem as if intractable. Logics of equivalence can liken asylum seekers to the threat posed by a 'swarm' of insects; or the problems could be represented as multiple examples of individual misfortune to be mitigated by acts of discretionary generosity. In contrast, logics of equivalence could apply the social model of disability, outlined in Chapter 1, to issues

of migration. This could foreground collective responsibility to remove socially constructed barriers to accessing universal needs. Analysis of discursive representation of equivalence enables understanding of what underpins current policy and practice, highlighting contingency and clarifying the appropriate focus for contestation.

Identity and subject position

Different logics of equivalence result in different perceptions of appropriate alliances. People with different subject positions may unite by drawing on an 'us-them' axis to highlight a 'common negation or threat' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.144). For example, an alliance of property owners and environmentalists, characterised as 'Volvos and vegans' (Griggs and Howarth, 2016), with significantly different subject positions, became united in opposition to the expansion of Manchester airport, thereby foregrounding a common enemy while relegating other differences. In relation to disabled asylum seekers, if the problem were represented assuming the prime legitimacy of citizens, then distinctions between 'us' and 'them' relate to migration status. However, focusing on barriers to meeting human needs, might frame 'us' as the movement resisting inequality.

A person's subject position and identity shape their perceptions and alliances. Any identity is discursively situated, contingent and relational (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.113). Some positions and identities may be chosen, while others are outside individual control. Foucault (1990, p.23) explains that there are always, and inevitably, 'heterogeneous procedures and practices at work in the production of always-provisional "subjects"'. However, whether an individual accepts a label associated with, for example, migration status, may have no greater relevance than whether an individual in a capitalist society considers themselves capitalist. Without systemic contestation, individual rejection of hegemonic values may have little impact on the existence of such values. Peter Fleming and André Spicer (2007) provide the example of a McDonald's employee wearing a T-shirt denigrating the company underneath his uniform. This act of rebellion may enable him to feel less subservient, however, it does not threaten the company. In satisfying a need to rebel, it may even make him more compliant at work. To contest a subject position requires more fundamental change than an individual slogan.

The impact of a subject position may fluctuate, with different elements of identity and therefore alliances foregrounded according to situation. Apparently disparate logics may be articulated for a specific and temporary purpose, such as the alliance of 'Volvos and vegans' (Griggs and Howarth, 2016) mentioned above. From my own experience, being vegetarian does not feel significant to my daily identity, unless I am surrounded by meat-eaters, when different conceptions of normality become apparent. This is not to say that the issue is irrelevant at other times, but that it appears to me as normal, therefore not worth consideration. Howarth et al. argue that 'how we relate to 'our Thing' will be vital for how we relate to others and their identifications' (2016, p.102).

Our understanding of the world and the allegiances we create are all contingent on our subject positions.

Beyond issues of personal choice, an individual's subject position and their perspective are shaped by wider power relations. As Hegel pointed out in 1807, a slave owner perceives the world differently from a slave (Hegel, 1977). Using a feminist perspective, Dorothy Smith (1987) develops Hegel's standpoint theory, stressing the socially situated and variable basis of knowledge. She explains that the insights of women with marginalised positions may be different from men's, not because of biological differences, but because the social norms of patriarchal society may be concealed from men with dominant positions. Adapting standpoint theory, Hill Collins (1990) explains that the intersectional perspectives of black women provide distinct perspectives from those stemming from racism or sexism alone. In relation to forced migration, the past traumas, current struggles for survival, and fears of future detention or deportation, which are routine for many asylum seekers, are largely alien to the personal experiences of the wider population of citizens including employees in the asylum sector. These stark differences may result in observations which are concealed to others. The organising slogan of the disabled people's movement is 'nothing about us without us'. This recognises that the perspectives of people whose subject positions include lived experience of disability provides essential expertise in understanding experiences of marginalisation and associated power inequalities.

Dislocation, articulation, and contestation

No practical or theoretical intervention takes place in a vacuum. Ostensibly new practices may contribute to the dislocation of wider logics or may be articulated within the existing balance. As such, hegemony may be reinforced or contested. Articulation is defined as 'any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.105), or as the 'hinge that links contingent elements together' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.208). In contrast, dislocation occurs, when, according to Glynos and Howarth (2007, p.143) 'a sense emerges, however localised or diffuse this may be, that "things are not quite right"'. The contingency of a social order is shaped by the articulation or dislocation of discursive struggles.

With or without overt contestation, a poststructuralist approach assumes that discourse is inherently contingent and incomplete. In her analysis of Gramscian common-sense, Crehan explains that:

> only to the extent that we accept, whatever our actual social and economic location, the hegemonic narratives portraying the world as seen from the vantage point of those who hold power might we say that we inhabit a common, shared world. (2016, p.52)

She goes on to explain that 'fundamental social change', relies on imagining a different reality, citing Gramsci's call for 'a new common-sense' (2016, p.55). With this goal, poststructural discourse theory facilitates analysis of what underpins injustices

associated with disability and forced migration, and how a 'new common-sense' could be developed.

Politics or policing

When considering effective forms of contestation, it is instructive to combine poststructuralist analysis of discursive logics with Rancière's (1999) distinction between policing and politics. According to him, the term politics is generally used to refer to:

> the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organization of the powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing the distribution. I propose to give this system of distribution and legitimization another name. I propose to call it the police. (1999, p.28)

In contrast, as he continues:

> Politics exists when the natural order of domination is interrupted by the institution of the part of those who have no part. (1999, p.11)

Such a moment of politics is necessary if hegemonic change is to be achieved. However, as he elaborates, politics happens 'very little or rarely', only when the mechanisms of the social order are:

> stopped in their tracks by the effect of a presupposition that is totally foreign to them yet without which none of them could ultimately function: presupposition of the equality of anyone and everyone, or the paradoxical effectiveness of the sheer contingency of any order. (1999, p.17)

This focus on 'the sheer contingency of any order' highlights that the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability in the asylum system are not inevitable. If disabled asylum seekers are currently assumed to be among those who Rancière conceives as having 'no part', then the institution of a part would have the potential to dislocate hegemonic definitions of normality. The distinction is summarised by Nikolai von Eggers (2013): 'politics is what disrupts the existing order, while policing is the attempt to avoid such a disruption … to retain the order as it is'. Forces of policing may be promoted as pragmatic adjustments to maintain the stability of the existing social order, however, such stability risks hindering contestation of systemic injustice. According to Rancière (1999, p.12), 'there is nothing but the order of domination or the disorder of revolt'. Drawing on these distinctions, the original assertion of the social model of disability can be considered a moment of politics, in which disabled people assert a part and contest structural inequalities. However, exemplifying the contingency of discursive representations, hegemonic reference to the social model increasingly focuses on adjustments, or 'policing', such that greater numbers of disabled people are included, rather than contesting systemic inequalities. Such policing is neither based on an equal part for disabled people, nor does it contest the causes of oppression.

The analytical approach of this study is summarised in Table 1. Assuming that hegemonic discursive representations are never fixed, this study investigates ongoing discursive struggles underpinning current restrictions and inequalities. This analytical approach is combined with Rancière's (1999) distinctions between moments of politics and policing.

Table 1: Discursive logics of explanation

Social logics	Social logics form rarely contested common-sense, defining the limits of discursive struggles for hegemony.
Moment of contestation	Discursive struggles are ongoing. These may result in policing distinctions of entitlement or in moments of politics through which people with no part assert their part.
Political logics	Overt struggles may be limited to political logics of equivalence and difference.
Fantasmatic logics	Discourse is underpinned by eternal struggles for completeness, or to reclaim enjoyment.

2.5 Relating these theoretical positions to inequalities associated with migration and disability

Analysis of social, political and fantasmatic discursive logics facilitates understanding of what underpins inequalities associated with migration and disability, as well as how effective contestation might be realised. The interplay between theory and practice is essential to understanding the contingency of current policy and practice. As Bacchi explains, theory itself is a practice that plays a key role in producing the "real"'. With regard to discursive representation of immigration, hegemonic social logics reinforce the assumed '"reality" of "nation-states" (2012, p.6). In practice, the assumed legitimacy of this 'reality' results in different rules and entitlements for members and non-members. Similarly, competing theoretical understandings of disability locate the problem differently, with practical implications on the 'real' of disabled people's lives. The 'social reality' (Schütz, 1967) of intersectional experiences combines and compounds socially constructed responses to disability and migration. Lack of entitlement can result in people becoming so marginalised as to become either invisible to mainstream society or to be perceived as an immutable problem too large to be addressed. The result is to frame ongoing injustice as intractable.

To focus on the social construction of disability or migration is not to negate the physical and emotional pain that may be associated with having an impairment, or with fleeing one's home. People may experience pain for numerous reasons during their lives, however, this is not inevitably associated with either restricted access to services and

support, or with extra entitlements associated with being considered particularly 'worthy'. This study explores the basis and impact of distinctions of entitlement, rather than individual embodied experiences. If the restrictions and inequalities stem from a socially constructed response, then attention must be directed to the causes, impact, and alternatives to that response.

2.6 Criticisms and possible weaknesses of a social constructionist and poststructuralist framework

Possible weaknesses and criticisms of this theoretical framework must be considered. Social constructionist and poststructuralist positions have been criticised for lack of the objectivity required for political analysis (Bury, 1996). Similarly, Martyn Hammersley (2007) questions the usefulness of research findings based on subjective assumptions which he suggests can claim equal legitimacy. Such criticism misrepresents the nature of subjectivity. Firstly, it is assumed here that all research stems from subjective perceptions, as all understanding is shaped by a person's subject position. The difference is whether subjective premises are overtly discussed and analysed. Secondly, the purpose of research findings is to *contribute to*, not *substitute for* debate. As Mouffe argues, there are always multiple options, and political debate depends on discussion of alternatives (2005a, b, 2007). Thirdly, exposing the contingency of the social order facilitates analysis of alternatives. Political action is inevitably based on choices and subjective prioritisation of values. Mouffe (2007, p.18) explains:

> What is at a given moment considered as the 'natural' order - jointly with the 'common sense' which accompanies it - is the result of sedimented hegemonic practices; it is never the manifestation of a deeper objectivity exterior to the practices that bring it into being.

The use of poststructuralist discourse theory exposes the contingent and therefore contestable nature of all political struggles. It highlights the determinants of the current order, what is presented as 'common-sense', and how these impact on the development of alternatives. This approach has been further criticised for paying insufficient attention to inequalities of access (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p.125). However, awareness of such inequalities is core to the motivation for this investigation. As will be highlighted in Chapter 3, the methodology includes specific action to ensure the insights of people with diverse subject positions are considered.

Perhaps the most significant criticisms for this study are those from scholars of disability studies, including Oliver (1999), Oliver and Barnes (2012) and Clifford (2020). I am greatly indebted to these academics and activists on whose work I seek to build. However, I question their rejection of poststructuralism. Clifford argues that:

> we need to renew active links between activism and academia. The academic discipline of disability studies originally developed with an intention to intervene in the real world and to inform application in practice. The growing dominance of post-modernism/post-structuralism weakened the link, with output becoming less accessible to disabled

people and less relevant to our lives. (2020, p.308)

This comment appears to be levelled at scholars who reject the social model of disability with its activist roots, along with proponents of the relatively recent discipline of Critical Disability Studies rooted less in understanding disability as the socio-economic consequence of capitalism and more as the result of relativist conceptions of normality (Goodley, 2010; Goodley, Hughes and Davis, 2012). Without wishing to overly engage with this academic divide, my research is explicitly designed to assert links 'between activism and academia' (Clifford, 2020, p.308) and to be highly 'relevant to our lives' (ibid). Whether that is achieved can be assessed in the forthcoming chapters.

Conclusion

Social constructionism and poststructuralism form the theoretical framework from which to explore what underpins current inequalities associated with disability and forced migration, and how these could be contested. This approach assumes that all understanding is inherently discursively situated. Drawing on the analytical approach of Glynos and Howarth (2007), this study examines the interrelated social, political and fantasmatic logics constituting the social order. If current policy and practice are to be contested, the discursive representation on which it is based must be challenged and alternatives developed. More specifically for this study, to remedy the injustices faced by disabled asylum seekers, there must be understanding of what underpins current restrictions such that contestation can be targeted at causal factors. Rancière's (1999) distinctions between policing and a moment of politics aid investigation of the initiatives that currently exist. This study investigates the discursive representations on which the existing social order is based to enable effective contestation of ongoing restrictions and inequalities.

This poststructuralist theoretical framework is combined with methodological elements of action research, phenomenology, privileging the perceptions of those with lived experience, which are the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 3. Methodology: investigating and contesting inequalities associated with disability and forced migration

> *research into others' suffering can only be justified if alleviating that suffering is an explicit objective.* (Turton, 1996, p.96)

Having outlined the key literature and the theoretical framework on which this study is based, I now turn to the methodological design. This chapter focuses on the research purpose, questions for investigation and how these are addressed. First, the focus of investigation and research questions are clarified. The development and rationale for the chosen combination of qualitative research methods is then discussed before focusing on the specific application in this study.

The four key research stages are then discussed. The first stage focusses on the discursive struggles underpinning UK government policies shaping current entitlements and restrictions faced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees. The second stage explores how these hegemonic discursive representations are reinforced or contested by people responsible for implementation of policy and practice. The perceptions of people with lived experience of the impact are then considered. The final stage investigates how representations of the problem frame the solutions that appear appropriate. This stage includes findings from the events that I organised to bring together people with different subject positions. These events contributed both to the information gathering and action research elements of the study.

After setting out the methodological design and rationale, I turn to practicalities, including recruitment of contributors, use of interpreters, methods of recording and analysis. Ethical issues are core to the study. These are discussed in relation to guidelines from the British Sociological Association (2017) and Economic and Social Research Council (2019). The chapter finishes by returning to the inevitable influence of my positionality, followed by discussion of the research limitations and methodological conclusions. This chapter provides the framework for the empirical analysis in subsequent chapters.

3.1 Research aims and focus

The investigation is premised on three core assumptions, which it is necessary to clarify before considering the research questions in greater depth. All research is inevitably shaped by human assumptions. However, where there is 'blurring between academic and activist work' (Angeles and Pratt, 2017, p.275) it is particularly important to make these as explicit as possible. Firstly, building on previous literature (Harris and Roberts, 2001; Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008; Yeo, R., 2017a), I assume that the restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees in the UK are unjust. Without denying the suffering inherent to both forced migration and many forms of

impairment, I draw on the distinction made by Judith Shklar (1990) between misfortune and injustice caused by human action or inaction. Without denying that misfortune may have an impact on experiences of disability or forced migration, the focus of this study is on the contingent and changeable nature of injustice. Secondly, adopting a social model approach (Oliver, 1983), I assume that the barriers hindering disabled asylum seekers from meeting human needs in the UK are socially and politically constructed and therefore contestable. Thirdly, taking a poststructuralist perspective, I assume the current social order, like any other, is contingent on historic and ongoing socio-economic relations. Drawing on political theorists including Mouffe (2005b) and Rancière (1999), I assume that there are infinite ways that society could be organised. These core assumptions shape my academic and political motivation, which underpins this research design.

The restrictions experienced by disabled asylum seekers are presented by some scholars as resulting from inadequate evidence. Ward et al. (2008, p.11) complain that 'reliable data on this population remains absent, inconsistent and based largely on estimates'. They claim that 'unless reliable data is collected, it will remain difficult to comprehensively assess the needs of these groups and to provide concrete evidence to target services and leverage funding' (ibid). Some scholars assert that little is known about these issues (see for example Burns, 2017, p.1463) as if this is uncontroversial. However, this assumes that lack of academic study equates with lack of knowledge, thereby obscuring the existence of knowledge and expertise gained from lived experience. This tendency is prevalent regarding wider issues of disability, as highlighted by Beresford (2000). The problem may not be lack of knowledge but lack of respect for the knowledge and priorities of people with expertise by experience.

The instigators of the social model, UPIAS, argue for research to contribute to social and political change:

> we already know what it feels like to be poor, isolated, segregated, done good to, stared at, and talked down … What we are interested in are ways of changing our conditions of life, and thus overcoming the disabilities which are imposed on top of our physical impairments by the way this society is organised to exclude us. (UPIAS, 1976, p.5)

Similarly, 'we already know' that disabled asylum seekers experience deprivation (Harris and Roberts, 2001) and that the 'hostile environment' is explicitly designed to be hostile (Kirkup, 2012; Lewis, Waite and Hodkinson, 2017; Hiam, Steele and McKee, 2018; Liberty, 2018; Goodfellow, 2019). Therefore, evidence of hostility and associated negative impact on 'conditions of life' is unlikely to prompt policy change. As Peter Beresford argues, some researchers assume that:

> by telling the government how much damage its policies are doing, it will magically stop imposing them. Or that if they show "the public" how bad things are, then "something will have to change". (2017)

The lack of significant policy change resulting from previous research regarding the experiences of disabled asylum seekers (Harris and Roberts, 2001; Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008; Yeo and Bolton, 2013) suggests the need is not for more evidence of 'how bad things are', but for understanding what underpins current inequalities and how effective change might be realised.

This research was designed not just to increase knowledge but also to make a positive contribution to people's lives. The aims went 'beyond do no harm' (Mackenzie, C., McDowell and Pittaway, 2007, p.299) and beyond Jacobsen and Landau's (2003) call for the 'dual imperative' to combine academic rigour with policy relevance. I agree with those who assert the existence of a 'triple imperative' (Block et al., 2013, p.84) but reject the prioritisation of 'capacity building' which risks obscuring the power inequalities hindering the assertion of existing capacity. There is a need to acknowledge and respect the expertise developed through lived experience of disability and forced migration. However, it takes time and energy to analyse the causes of current inequalities. Therefore, responsibility to find solutions to injustice cannot lie with those who are most oppressed and already struggling for survival. My 'third imperative' is therefore to contribute to the collective responsibility to address the problems asserted by experts by experience.

Research questions

Premised on these aims and assumptions, my research questions build on previous studies and bring together the expertise of people with different subject positions. In accordance with Cindi Katz (1994, p.72), I sought to 'frame questions that are at once of substantive and theoretical interest as well as of practical significance to those with whom we work'. With these objectives, the primary question was to assess how hegemonic representations of the needs and entitlements associated with disability and forced immigration in the UK are determined, reinforced, or contested.

More specifically, I analysed:

1. What are the dominant discursive struggles determining government policies regarding the restrictions and inequalities of entitlement imposed on people with intersectional experiences of disability and forced migration? (Chapter 4)

2. How are hegemonic representations of these needs and entitlements reflected, reinforced, or contested by people with diverse roles regarding implementation of formal and informal entitlements? (Chapter 5); and by people with lived experience of the impact of existing restrictions and inequalities? (Chapter 6)

3. How do representations of the problem frame current responses and how a moment of more fundamental political contestation might be achieved? (Chapter 7)

Taking a poststructuralist position, if existing assumptions and structures are contingent, then all hypotheses are inevitably provisional. A retroductive approach (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.25) allows for changing hypotheses during the study.

3.2 Choice and rationale for research strategy

With these research aims and assumptions, I took a qualitative approach, combining elements of poststructuralist discourse theory, action research and phenomenology. Quantitative methods were rejected for this study, despite what Raymond Lee (1993, p.55) refers to as the tendency to assume that producing 'numerical estimates helps to fix the dimensions of a social problem' and that 'persuasive power' is associated with numbers. As Oliver and Barnes (1998, p.13) argue, research focused on 'proving' the numbers of disabled people failed to have a significant positive impact on disability policy because they 'focused on the wrong thing; that is, they have tried to measure the number of disabled people rather than the effects of disabling environments'. Similarly, I assume that the degree of injustice is not dependent on the number of people affected. In quantitative terms, the experiences of disabled asylum seekers might be considered statistically insignificant. However, acknowledgement of the common humanity of those hegemonically framed as insignificant is core to preventing restrictions being extended to a wider population.

The study was designed to investigate different perceptions of the problems associated with disability and forced migration, and the solutions that thereby appear appropriate. The adoption of elements of action research and phenomenology was intended to allow for the privileging of the expertise of lived experience. However, as Glynos and Howarth (2007, p.13) stress:

> We cannot rely *exclusively* on what people say, or on their self-understandings, even though these views must be considered in any legitimate social explanation.

The analytical underpinning with discourse theory is essential to break with what Glynos and Howarth (2007, p.102) refer to as the 'hermeneutical tendency to reduce explanations to contextualised self-interpretations and the positivist tendency to subsume particulars under universal causal laws'. This combined approach facilitates analysis of how different perspectives intersect to reflect, reinforce, or contest dominant hegemonic discourse.

The rationale for these methodological approaches is considered, before turning to the specific methods used at different stages of the research process.

Elements of action research adopted for study of disability and forced migration.

The term 'action research' was introduced by Kurt Lewin in 1946 to describe research leading to social action. He focused on research promoting the 'independence, equality, and co-operation' of minority groups (Lewin, 1946; cited by Adelman, 1993). The term was developed by Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury to describe a 'family of practices' (2008, pp.3-4) characterised by 'collaborative relationships… in which dialogue and development can flourish'; respecting 'many ways of knowing'; and using the research process as a tool for 'seeking to address issues of significance,

concerning the flourishing of human persons'. With parallels to the retroductive approach of poststructuralist discourse theory, the 'emerging nature and flexibility' of action research is described as among its hallmarks (Koshy, 2011, p.8). The 'emerging nature' is often associated with a cyclical process (see for example Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000, p.564). However, as McTaggart writes:

> Action research is not a "method" … but a series of commitments to observe … a series of principles for conducting social enquiry. (1996, p.248)

This study drew on principles of participatory and emancipatory action research but did not adopt a strictly cyclical process.

The politics of participatory approaches

Participatory approaches are shaped by Paulo Freire's analysis of the role of oppressed people in creating change (1970). As encapsulated in the title of Robert Chambers' book *Putting the Last First* (1983), participatory action research can be used to challenge the power imbalance of traditional 'top-down' approaches. This approach is often presented as if inevitably a 'good thing' with criticism limited to possible methodological deficiencies, rather than questioning the progressive potential (Beresford, 2002, p.95). Yet, there is nothing inherently progressive about participation. As Sherry Arnstein (1969) argues, 'participation without redistribution of power **…** allows the powerholders to claim that *all* sides were considered, but … maintains the status quo'. To illustrate this, she cites the poster used during 1968 student protests in France:

French Student Poster. In English, I participate; you participate; he participates; we participate; you participate . . . They profit.

The notion that 'they' may profit from the participation of others highlights the potential for participation to reinforce, rather than contest, inequalities. This risk is described by Beresford's (2002) distinction between 'consumerist', and 'democratic', participation. Democratic approaches enable those taking part to shape the agenda and methods. In contrast, consumerist participation may be used to add legitimacy to the pre-existing agendas of the dominant class, by including controlled interventions from people with lived experience. This distinction is encapsulated by Wood (1985, p.25), who asks whether the part has 'been written before the "participants" are allowed to say their lines?'. The ethics of participation are further questioned by Uma Kothari and Bill Cook who describe the normative pressure that 'good' citizens *should* participate, as the '*new tyranny'* (2001). If the agenda is pre-determined, then as Ferreday and Hodgeson

(2008, p.640) warn, participation may have a 'dark side', enforcing oppression and control. This control is not necessarily overt. There may be elements of Lacanian 'enjoyment' (Stavrakakis, 2005), whereby 'participants' gain an illusion of contribution without real impact on the agenda or the outcome. However, if participation is accompanied with real control, then it is not just a technique for data gathering but may fundamentally challenge existing power relationships.

The potential for emancipatory action research

Working with broadly similar approaches, activists and academics in disability studies, such as Oliver (1990, 1992, 1997) and Barnes (1996) call for emancipatory methods to challenge positivistic research done *to* disabled people. In a similar vein to Beresford's call for democratic forms of participation, they call for disabled people to have control over research. Barnes (1996) argues that impartiality is impossible and that if researchers are on the side of the oppressed, then active and meaningful roles for disabled people are essential throughout the research process. Oliver (1992, p.111) argues that researchers should 'put their knowledge and skills at the disposal of their research subjects, for them to use in whatever ways they choose'. This approach challenges wider assumptions of the expertise of the academic in relation to their subjects. As Oliver (1997, p.22) explains, 'In eschewing objectivity and neutrality and embracing partisanship, we were clearly confronting many of the canons of scientific and social scientific approaches to research'. This contestation of the social relations of research production is essential if hegemonic change is required. Gerry Zarb (1992, p.128) explains that participation 'will never by itself constitute emancipatory research unless and until it is disabled people … controlling the research and deciding who should be involved and how'. With political sympathy for these principles, I sought to foreground the expertise of lived experience, revising my hypotheses and research methods after input from disabled asylum seekers. However, in the context of doctoral research, I acknowledge that ultimately it is I, not the research contributors, who decides 'who should be involved and how' (ibid). As Priestley and Stone (1996, p.15) write, 'Regardless of commitment to the emancipatory paradigm, the researcher is required to bow in several directions' to meet academic demands.

The potential for research to have emancipatory impact is unclear. In his later reflections, even Oliver explained that he had come 'to the inescapable and painful conclusion that the person who had benefited most from [his] research on disabled people's lives was undoubtedly [himself]' (1997, p.15). This research is designed to benefit people other than myself, however, my focus is not so much on individual emancipatory change, but on contesting hegemonic acceptance of inequalities associated with disability and forced migration, while also highlighting their broader impact. This approach draws on principles of social action research, characterised by non-hierarchical relationships, 'respecting … stakeholders as "knowers"' (Fleming, J. and Ward, 2004, p.165) in the context of broader goals of social change. For this purpose, action research is a useful component, without suggesting that this doctoral research is fully participatory.

To learn from the knowledge and insights of those with lived experience, it is also instructive to consider the literature of phenomenology.

Phenomenological approach to learning from the contributions of people with different subject positions

In conjunction with the overriding approach of poststructuralist discourse theory and elements of action research, I drew on aspects of phenomenology. Insights grounded in the reality and urgency of lived experience are assumed to bring knowledge of 'lifeworlds' (Husserl, 1936) that are commonly ignored, and which cannot be understood through theoretical study alone. As Marcus Banks (2001, p.179) asserts, people with lived experience 'know more about their own lives than a visiting researcher can ever hope to'. Reflecting on their research exploring working class lived experiences, Mackenzie et al. argue that the:

> conclusion from the research conducted with our participants – few of whom would claim to be 'highly educated' … is that … not only do many policymakers and practitioners have something to learn from them, so too does a significant section of the research community – ourselves included. (2015, p.16)

As Mackenzie et al. advocate, I seek to learn from those contributing to this study, particularly from the expertise of those with intersectional lived experience of disability and forced migration. More specifically, this work drew on literature from disability studies (Barnes, 2003; Beresford, 2013) asserting the expertise gained from experience.

This research design brought together contributions from people with diverse subject positions, assuming that perceptions are shaped by lived experiences and relationships. More importantly, it is assumed that perceptions of the problem shape understanding of alternatives and consequent action. Not all perspectives are, however, equally significant to this analysis, nor is it assumed that any lived experience exists in isolation. All perspectives shape, and are shaped by, a multitude of factors and are inherently contingent. As asserted by Shaun Gallagher (2012, p.7) 'every instance of consciousness is already situated in some contingent circumstance'. Drawing primarily on methodological approaches of disability studies (Stone and Priestley, 1996; Barnes, 2003), the input of those with lived experience of disability and forced migration was privileged for three basic reasons. Firstly, the suffering and injustice experienced by disabled asylum seekers is the central reason why this study matters. Secondly, the quest to build alternatives to the current situation may be facilitated by paying attention to those who are commonly ignored. Thirdly, the contributions of people with lived experience form a key role in the triangulation of results (see for example Van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999, p.92). For example, in an earlier study (Yeo, 2015b), a Home Office employee explained that asylum seekers are automatically referred for care assessments if there is any possibility of needing social care. Input from people with lived experience made clear that such referrals are not routinely implemented.

In practical terms, a phenomenological approach most specifically informed the interviewing approach of this study. If research is designed to attain comparable data with which to assess prevalence, then structured interviewing may be appropriate. A positivist approach to research generally assumes that if a researcher asks the question correctly, the interviewee will provide the necessary information (Gubrium and Holstein, 1997). In contrast, phenomenology does not aim for uniformity of questioning or data gathering. Instead, the goal is to enable exploration of topics raised by interviewees (Herman and Bentley, 1993). I had planned to use semi-structured interviews, but soon realised that this did not allow interviewees the control and agency to decide what they considered important and wished to share. My topic guide therefore became a loose basis for occasional prompts (Appendix 2), rather than an interview outline. This unstructured approach to interviewing, positions interviewees as 'constructors of knowledge' (Klenke, 2008), facilitating more egalitarian power relations between researcher and researched. The binary terms of researcher and participant do not fit easily with research grounded in lived experience. As McTaggart (1994, p.317) argues, the distinction between academics and participants implies that 'theory reside[s] in one place and its implementation in another'. He argues that such a view is the antithesis of a commitment to develop 'theoretically informed practice for all parties involved' (ibid). If research is understood as social action, as Melucci (1996) argues, then the researcher and all those involved are part of the process. This is not to deny the imbalance of power inherent in doctoral research, and perhaps all funded research.

The research strategy was divided into four overlapping stages drawing on these broad methodological components.

3.3 Research stages investigating diverse representation of problems associated with disability and forced migration, and how these shape perceived solutions

The investigation began by analysing the discursive logics underpinning key UK government policy documents determining current entitlements associated with disability and forced migration. Then I explored how the hegemony of elite policy discourse is reinforced, reflected, or contested by interviewees with different subject positions. According to Gramsci, 'all men (sic) are philosophers', adopting ideas which enable them to 'make sense of their lives' (cited by Simon, 1982, p.26). With the assumption that a person's experiences and relationships influence their perspective, attention turned to perspectives of the problem, presented by people with different roles regarding implementation of policy and practice associated with disability and migration. This was followed by analysis of the perspectives of people with lived experience of disability and forced migration. The perceptions of the 'subaltern' or those directly impacted by the hegemonic logics of government policy are also the people whose voices are rarely heard. Finally, I organised a series of events to bring

the voices of lived experience to a wider audience and I attended many meetings organised by others, regarding provision for asylum seekers and refugees. Observations from these events were combined with wider responses to issues of disability in the asylum sector. In all four stages, the discursive logics underpinning perceptions of the problem and associated solutions were considered. Analysis focused on exploring when hegemonic logics were reflected or reinforced and how alternatives were articulated or caused dislocation of the dominant order. In this analysis, Rancière's (1999) distinctions between politics and policing are significant. Political contestation is limited to occasions when 'the natural order of domination is interrupted by the institution of the part of those who have no part' (1999, p.11). In contrast, interventions which simply adjust the 'distribution and legitimization' (1999, p.28) of the existing order do not seek systemic change and are referred to as policing.

Stage 1. Discursive perspectives presented in elite policy documents

Chapter 4 provides analysis of the discursive struggles shaping elite discourse associated with disability and forced migration. Investigation focused on the social, political and fantasmatic logics of critical explanation (Glynos and Howarth, 2007), as discussed in Chapter 2. The documents selected for analysis are listed in Table 2:

Table 2: White Paper and key policy announcements

The discursive struggles shaping current immigration policy.	
(1998)	White Paper: 'Fairer, Faster and Firmer - a modern approach to immigration and asylum'.
(2014)	Policy announcement: 'The Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme for Syrian Nationals'.
The discursive struggles shaping disability policy	
(1999)	The Beveridge Lecture: Prime Minister Tony Blair, 'Beveridge revisited: a welfare state for the 21st century'.
(2006)	White Paper: 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services'.
(2010)	White Paper: 'Universal Credit: welfare that works'.
(2016)	Inquiry by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

These documents do not form a comprehensive account of government policy. They are selected for analysis because I argue that they are indicative of a discursive shift which shapes current entitlements and restrictions associated with disability and forced migration.

Analysis began with the White Paper 'Fairer, faster and firmer' (1998) which removed entitlement for asylum seekers to access the welfare state. This is not to suggest that

restrictions associated with disability and migration began that year. However, in removing acknowledgement of the financial costs of disability, this Paper marked a turning point in intersectional entitlement which continues to shape current policy. I then turned to analyse the introduction of the 'Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme for Syrian Nationals' (2014). The VPRS shifted hegemonic immigration policy to focus on selection of people framed as worthy of generosity. Analysis of disability policy discourse is focussed on developments over a similar period. The 1999 Beveridge Lecture given by then Prime Minister Tony Blair did not refer to the removal of support to asylum seekers, introduced the same year. Instead, his vision for welfare reform set out the rationale for removing support from a wider group of citizens. It appears that support could be removed from asylum seekers without significant public protest, however, his speech indicated that hegemonic contestation was needed for similar restrictions to be extended to citizens. Subsequent policy documents illustrate the shifts which occurred. In 2006, the White Paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services' ostensibly enabled disabled citizens to gain the long-awaited demand of 'choice and control', but this was accompanied by a discursive shift to locate responsibility with the individual. This shift was an essential precursor to the 2010 White Paper: 'Universal Credit: welfare that works'. The welfare reform was presented as if responding to the financial crisis of 2008, state services were reduced, and disabled service users became framed as a burden on wider society. This facilitated the removal of support from citizens in a manner reminiscent of that imposed on asylum seekers in 1999. Although there had been little protest at the removal of rights from asylum seekers, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities contested the UK government's actions.

These policies reflect dominant representations of the problem and associated solutions. As discussed, most people's access to information is shaped by cultural hegemony, with media 'controlled by the elites' (Van Dijk (1993, p.8). The discursive representations adopted by policymakers shape hegemonic understanding. Beyond this, taking a poststructuralist approach, I assume that people's understanding shapes their actions and is therefore integral to the nature of the social order. Cultural hegemony, as described by Gramsci (1971) is maintained through ideological control of information, education and cultural apparatus such that the existing system appears the only feasible option. In the absence of alternative discursive representations and contestation, elite discourse shapes assumed common-sense and becomes hegemonic.

Stage 2. Discursive perspectives of people with different roles and responsibilities in the asylum sector and disabled people's movement

The study then turned to analysis of how hegemonic representations of needs and entitlements associated with disability and forced migration are reflected, reinforced, or contested by people with different subject positions. Again, analysis focused on the discursive logics of explanation adopted by contributors. Purposive sampling (Spradley, 1979; Etikan et al., 2016) was used to find contributors with diverse

perspectives, including people designing, implementing or campaigning against different aspects of current policies as outlined in Table 3:

Table 3: Subject positions of contributors from the immigration sector and disabled people's movement

Unpaid activists or volunteers	Disabled people's organisations	4	Immigration sector	2
Voluntary sector employees	Disabled people's organisations	3	Immigration sector	4
Local authority	Social care	3	Resettlement	3
Civil servants	Home Office – asylum and resettlement. Department of Work and Pensions - disability			4
Legal professionals	Immigration and community care law			3
Politicians	Home Affairs select committee and local Council			2

All informants are referred to with anonymised references listed in Appendix 1. The ethical implications of this are discussed in 3.5 below.

Individual and organisational categories overlap and change. At the organisational level, employees may change their roles. Furthermore, blurred boundaries result from voluntary sector reliance on statutory funding and the outsourcing of statutory service provision. At the individual level, everybody has multiple, shifting roles, relationships, and experiences, which shape their perspectives and actions. It would be wrong to reduce analysis to binary alternatives of what Meister (2011, p.27) refers to as 'a narrow class of victims (those who suffered physical torment) and a narrow class of perpetrators (the active tormentors)'. Furthermore, Laclau (1996, p.92) explains 'if the subject were a mere subject position within the structure, the latter would be fully closed and there would be no contingency'. In other words, a person's current position is not the exclusive determinant of their perspective.

Stage 3. Discursive perspectives of the 'subaltern', or those with lived experiences of disability and forced migration

Specific attention was paid to perspectives stemming from lived experiences, drawing on a phenomenological approach outlined above. The knowledge and expertise of disabled asylum seekers are systematically undervalued through what Miranda Fricker (2007) refers to as epistemic injustice. This research was designed to contribute to redressing this imbalance, learning from the perspectives of those who are routinely ignored.

There was great variety in the extent to which people contributed to this study. According to Reid et al. (2005), the optimum number for involvement in phenomenological research is between three and fifteen. In this study, seventeen

people with lived experience of disability and forced migration contributed, however, there were very different levels of involvement. Some contributors helped shape my ideas before the study began. Some took part throughout the research process, including helping with event organisation, while others simply took part in a short interview. The diversity of the backgrounds of contributors with lived experience is summarised in Table 4. Anonymised referencing is used as outlined in Appendix 1.

Table 4: Contributors with lived experience of disability and migration

Disabled asylum seekers and refugees	Male, female	Impairments	Migration status	Countries of origin.
	12 m, 5 f	Physical, sensory, mental distress, learning difficulties.	14 asylum seekers or refused asylum seekers, 3 refugees or people with leave to remain.	Algeria, Bangladesh, Iraq, Iran, Kenya, Nigeria, Syria, Somalia, Zimbabwe,

There are disproportionate numbers of men compared with women in the wider population of asylum seekers. According to Home Office statistics, in 2017 there were 34,435 asylum applications, of whom 22,805, or 66% were male (UK Government, 2018b). As shown in Table 4, I spoke to more men than women. However, among those most engaged with the research process, there were three women and one man. I did not control people's level of involvement, instead, during the initial interview, I invited people to take part in a group discussion and to help plan public events. Feminist sociologist Ann Oakley (2016, p.196) describes how interviews between women may more easily 'incorporate elements of a "transition to friendship", based on shared gender subordination'. It may be that more women chose to become more deeply engaged in the research process, because as a woman myself it is easier to build trust based on some level of shared experience.

It was at this research stage that I realised that semi-structured interviews were inappropriate. While meeting das5, he called his daughter in his country of origin to introduce her to me. His embodiment of the stigma directed at refugees (Tyler, 2020) was such that he warned me his daughter did not know he was a refugee. He had such clear evidence of persecution that he had been granted unusually rapid refugee status, yet he wanted his daughter to think he had migrated for work. It is unlikely that he would have told me this if he had not rung his daughter. Using an unstructured approach enabled space for what Janet Waters (2016) refers to as the 'thoughts, feelings, images, sensations, memories' which make up the 'essential meaning' of lived experience. Some analysts refer to similar approaches as 'giving voice' to the concerns of participants (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006, p.102). However, this suggests that people did not previously have a voice, thereby locating the problem as their lack, rather than with systemic inequalities framing marginalised voices as unworthy of being heard. In contrast, as Jean-Philippe Deranty (2003, p.140) argues, 'to learn about domination

and emancipation, the intellectual will have to be taught by those who suffer and rebel'. Gramsci (1971) used the term 'organic intellectuals' to apply to those from a non-dominant class who contest the ideas of the dominant class. I do not suggest that all contributors with lived experience routinely contest the hegemony, however, they do contribute perspectives which would otherwise be inaccessible to me. I therefore consider it highly appropriate that one disabled asylum seeker (das8) agreed to be involved as my teacher, but not as my participant. The unstructured approach enabled people to focus on issues which they considered important in ways that they controlled.

The precarity of people's existence hindered making firm commitments. Initially, I sought to make appointments to meet people, however, I soon realised it was necessary to work in a more impromptu manner. In the context of ongoing threats of detention, das8 stressed she could not make plans. Within some logistical constraints, I was therefore flexible as to where we met, when, how often, and what we talked about. The resultant need for spontaneity was harder when I needed an interpreter. If a future appointment was uncertain, I sometimes used amateur interpreters. The problematic nature of this is returned to, however, the alternative would have been not to include these people, thereby exacerbating the impact of language barriers.

I originally planned to use creative methods as a research tool, as advocated by Sarah Pink et al (2012). However, the disabled asylum seekers I worked with, rejected the idea of taking photographs or drawing pictures to explain messages to a wider audience. If the policies are deliberate, then echoing the perception of Peter Beresford (2017), das8 argued that awareness-raising is no solution. She explained 'if somebody is hungry, then eat something for you to be satisfied'. She was scornful of the function of art, saying that however beautiful a picture, it will not solve the need. I have previously used art in research (Yeo and Bolton, 2008, 2013) and argue that this can facilitate bringing people together, to discuss and convey key messages in accessible ways. Nonetheless, the wishes and priorities of contributors were central to my doctoral research design. There was greater interest in the use of film. Therefore, films formed a key part of the action research elements of this study. I worked with a film-maker to create short films of people expressing the messages which they wished to be understood by a wider audience. The films were edited collaboratively, enabling people involved to decide what they did, or did not, want included. To date, the films have been used at events organised in the final stage of this research, as well as at the Permanent People's Tribunal on Migration in London (October 2018), at a conference on disability and migration at the University of Malta (November 2018), and on social media. It is questionable how film-making is functionally different from art designed to convey messages, but most importantly, in research designed to contribute to social change, methods must be chosen according to people's wishes.

A core misconception in my planning was that people with lived experience would have a central role in developing alternatives. I had imagined that people who have been dislocated from their former lives, who are less established in the existing system,

would have greater capacity to envisage alternatives than those whose upbringing and livelihoods are entrenched in the system as it currently is. As Lorde (2017, p.16) famously asserted, 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house…they will never enable us to bring about genuine change'. With the aim of contributing to a process of 'genuine change', my expectation was that those gaining least from the 'masters tools' would be in a superior position to see alternative means of dismantling the 'master's house'. However, this plan was challenged by my first interviewee (das11) who explained, 'I don't have the energy … I myself am in a floating boat that I can anytime fall down'. She explained that people in less precarious living conditions must take the lead in developing alternatives. This is not to diminish the significance of lived experience in terms of developing a broader movement of resistance, but to question the leadership role I had envisaged. This situation is not unique to disabled asylum seekers. As Mary Jean Hande and Christine Kelly write, some disabled people in Canada spend:

> endless hours of organizing and physical and emotional labour simply to 'get through the day'. This leaves limited energy and time to focus on other political projects and tackle broad socio-economic processes like austerity and neoliberalism that have forced them into these conditions to begin with. (2015, p.970)

This is not to diminish the significance of the insights and analysis stemming from lived experience. Rather, it is to highlight the impact of deprivation of human needs. Drawing on Gramsci, Crehan (2016, p.188) argues that 'the incoherent common sense of subalterns' must be developed with support from others, 'into coherent political narratives'. I do not suggest that the common-sense of lived experience is incoherent, but that people may lack the energy to develop and assert ideas. The solution is not to ignore the voices and insights of lived experience but to provide for human needs such that people have the capacity to contribute to hegemonic contestation and development of alternatives.

Stage 4. The results of bringing people together

The final stage of the research strategy drew on discursive explanations adopted by people attending wider events. I organised several events to bring together disabled asylum seekers and citizens. The largest of these events took place on June 29th, 2018 (dmas1) bringing together approximately 200 disabled asylum seekers, disabled citizens, local authority staff, trade unionists, services providers, academics, and activists. We had a formal memorial to Kamil Ahmad and Bijan Ebrahimi, both disabled refugees who were murdered in Bristol. This was followed by a procession (see Figure 2) and, finally, discussion led by disabled citizens and refugees.

Figure 2: Procession leaving Bristol City Hall

In addition, I organised roundtable discussions on 28th September and 12th November 2018 (dmas2) for local authority and voluntary sector employees, focused on the barriers experienced by asylum seekers accessing social care. Finally, I co-organised an event on 27th July 2019 (dmas3), bringing together disabled citizens and asylum seekers to explore collective history and current ways forward. All these events involved many planning meetings with asylum seekers, activists, and voluntary sector employees.

The purpose of these events was to provide a wider forum for discussion of the experiences of disabled asylum seekers, to explore different perspectives of the problem and possible solutions, and to contribute to developing a broader community of resistance and solidarity. In these ways, I sought to move away from 'extractive, colonial, and elitist forms of knowledge production' (Angeles and Pratt, 2017, p.271). In so doing, as Gabriel Winant (2015) describes, there is a quest to explore 'what latent things do you and I share that might, if activated, endow us with …. collective potency'. The equalising element of facilitating learning from disabled asylum seekers may have successfully contributed to building what Rancière (1999, p.22) refers to as 'logos' or 'a memorial speech, an account to be kept up'. The events also served 'to build communities of solidarity beyond the university' (Angeles and Pratt, 2017, p.271). The sense of solidarity which developed particularly during planning meetings, together with the sense of contributing to a process of political change, became important elements for self-care, and therefore have ethical significance, as will be discussed. These events were largely unsuccessful regarding the movement building and political influence I had hoped for, as will be explained in Chapter 7. Nonetheless, the organisation and indeed the political failure of these events, provide useful insights for this study.

During the study, I also attended many meetings and events, organised by other people, in response to issues of forced migration in which issues of disability were sometimes considered, albeit with varying degrees of ambiguity. These meetings included informal gatherings, and more formal meetings of people working on issues of support to asylum seekers and refugees at the level of national, city, district, and

small town. I estimate that I took part in over 100 hours of such activities during the study, however, some of these simply contribute to background knowledge. The meetings that I have been involved with during the research process include the equalities sub-group of the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum (Nasf). This forum is made up of Home Office and NGO staff working on asylum issues (referred to in this study as nm1). I presented previous research to them in 2014 and then continued to attend regular meetings. I also attended meetings of a District Council initiative to discuss issues facing migrants in the area (dcm2) as well as a small-town initiative of supporters of resettled Syrian refugees (lm3). In addition, I attended several social gatherings of asylum-seeking communities and allies, political gatherings of activists, and academic conferences.

My motivation for involvement in these meetings was in part political, to inform myself as well as to contribute to debate. I took the role of contributor, or participant observer, rather than explicitly attending for purposes of data gathering. At times I made interventions based on my political perspective and my research findings. The observations referred to here, stem from my journal notes and publicly available meeting records, rather than verbatim transcriptions. On the occasions where I had not gained clear written consent from meeting participants, I avoid citing people individually and change identifying features if necessary. However, none of these meetings were private or confidential.

The different objectives and methods of the four different research stages are summarised in Table 5:

Table 5: Summary of research design

Research questions	**Chapter**	**Sources of information**	**Methods**
a) The dominant discursive struggles underpinning government policies determining current restrictions and inequalities of entitlement.	4	UK government documents in the public domain, determining the direction of immigration and disability policy.	Analysis of the discursive logics shaping key changes in entitlements associated with disability and migration.
b) The discursive representations of the problem used by people with different subject	5	Interviews with: - people with diverse roles regarding implementation of formal and informal entitlements (statutory	Discursive analysis of interview transcriptions, journal notes,

positions and how these reflect, reinforce, or contest the hegemony.	6	service providers, civil servants, legal professionals, voluntary sector employees, unpaid volunteers, activists). - Disabled asylum seekers and refugees with lived experience of the impact of these inequalities. Collaborative events and wider meetings regarding immigration issues at national, district and local levels.	meeting minutes, participant observation.
c) How representations frame perceived solutions and how it could be otherwise.	7	Drawing on the findings from a) and b).	As above

3.4 Research practicalities

This research design raises some additional practical considerations which require more in-depth consideration.

Recruitment

Purposive sampling was used to seek contributions from people with diverse subject positions (listed in Appendix 1). In addition, disabled asylum seekers were largely referred to me by word of mouth, particularly by staff of a refugee support organisation drawing on long-term informal connections. This sampling method, known as snowballing, is often used to find 'hidden' populations (Bloch, A., 1999). Patrick Christian (2012) explains that finding people for qualitative research may depend not just on physical location but also on trusting relationships with gatekeepers. As stressed by Jacobsen and Landau (2003), such recruitment methods are problematic if contributors seek their involvement to be confidential. However, these were the most appropriate methods in the circumstances.

Despite these attempts at including people with diverse experiences, there are undoubtedly gaps. It is difficult for people in situations of crisis to take part. I met one person (das14) just once, for less than an hour. It was his first visit to the voluntary organisation where I was temporarily based. He was highly agitated, complaining of insomnia caused by fear of his dreams and of being unable to focus because he had too much in his head. Without any practical support to offer, this research was unhelpful

to him. Furthermore, voluntary organisations with an emphasis on informal peer support may be inaccessible to people with such anxiety. It should, therefore, be noted that the people who contributed most to this research are not necessarily those in greatest need.

I was unsuccessful in gaining input from people with as wide a range of subject positions as I wished. I tried to contact Members of Parliament with responsibility for disability or immigration decision-making, however, I only successfully interviewed one person from the Home Affairs Select Committee. I was also unsuccessful in reaching people with more overt roles in the implementation of government policy. I drew on contacts in trade unions as well as the Home Office, however, people may be particularly wary of speaking to a stranger about work that is clearly problematic. I also tried multiple routes to contact disabled people selected for the VPRS, using contacts at national, city and small-town levels, but only one disabled refugee from this scheme contributed to this study. I speculate that gatekeepers may have been wary of facilitating contact, as I had expressed reservations about the scheme. This highlights a potential research limitation, of apparently more willing collaboration from people who support the research premise. Another of the barriers to securing involvement of disabled asylum seekers stemmed from understanding of disability. Different cultural and linguistic backgrounds may result in people not labelling themselves as disabled. My reliance on gatekeepers meant that I also relied on their understanding of the different possible manifestations of disability. To reduce confusion, I produced fliers (Appendix 3) in different languages, explaining the purpose of this research, including some examples of impairments, and inviting disabled people to take part.

Perceptions of the research purpose and likely consequences may shape willingness to be involved. Lee (1993, p.8) describes people's reluctance to be involved in research perceived to be 'completely futile', such as studies designed 'to reveal that unemployment was an unpleasant experience'. If potential negative consequences are envisaged, then consent or full engagement may be hindered. The shared purpose element of action research may provide necessary incentive for people to be involved, however, there may need to be explicit 'actions of reciprocity' (Harrison, MacGibbon and Morton, 2001). In research designed to respect the knowledge of those with lived experience, and to reduce distinctions between the researcher and the researched, it is inconsistent when some people respond through their employment and are, in effect, paid for their time, while others contribute voluntarily. Some analysts believe that when working with people living in precarious circumstances, even modest remuneration may result in people feeling obliged to take part, so reducing capacity for informed consent (see Wiles et al., 2005). However, as Wertheimer and Miller (2008, p.392) argue, 'the situation of financial payment for research is no different - with respect to coercion - from payment for public service jobs'. Payment is assumed to be a central element of employment, yet it is not generally suggested that the associated coercion creates untrustworthy employees. Nonetheless, paid work is generally illegal for asylum

seekers (Mayblin, 2016), therefore, it is not possible to provide full financial recognition of people's contribution. Instead, people were provided with refreshments and expenses but not cash payments. This may be the best solution possible in the circumstances, but I remain uncomfortable with the inherent inequalities between contributors.

Use of interpreters

Similar issues of positionality may apply to interpreters as to interviewers. As Jacobsen and Landau (2003, p.193) describe, there is a risk when using interpreters that past associations transgress 'political, social or economic fault-lines of which the researcher may not be aware'. Problems securing anonymity may arise if interpreters are used from a small community. These issues may be balanced to some degree if interviewees choose their interpreter. In this study, das7 rejected several proposed interpreters. Some interpreters also rejected proposed work because of the risk of being retraumatised if someone recounts experiences which are similar to their own. Methodological issues arising from language barriers discussed by Bogussia Temple and Rhetta Moran (2006) are echoed by the experiences in this study. Additional communication barriers arose when interviewees' (das1 and 6) asserted that their English was good enough and that they did not need interpreters. It could have been undermining to insist on an interpreter, yet I struggled to understand them. Furthermore, contact with them was spontaneous and they may not have returned for an appointment with an interpreter.

On some occasions, there may be advantages to working without interpreters, despite reduced accuracy of communication. Some people appeared more relaxed and forthcoming without an interpreter present. For example, communication with das5, was through a mixture of our combined broken French, English, and gestures. I did not digitally record this contact but noted in my journal that I felt it worked well despite linguistic barriers. Much communication relies on building trust, which may be easier without an interpreter and a recorder, however, it is uncertain whether understanding is accurate. At our first meeting, I had understood das5 to say that he was too distressed to focus on learning English. When I returned with an interpreter for the second meeting, he then said that the problem in the English class was that other students were too noisy. I am unsure whether I misunderstood the first time, whether he did not want to refer to his mental distress in front of an interpreter, or whether these are simply multiple components of the barriers experienced which may be prioritised at different times. Such fluctuating accounts highlight how what is learned from such interviews must be considered as a contribution to the development of ideas, rather than necessarily as objective 'facts'.

Facilitating and recording research contributions

My interviews were almost all digitally recorded and transcribed. There were a few exceptions: when attempted recording failed due to background noise or technical error; when informal conversations developed into important research contributions,

but when it seemed too disruptive to ask to record the interaction; or when fears of possible retribution if criticisms were traced, resulted in people asking for their comments not to be recorded. Such requests are respected, as set out in the BSA ethical guidelines (2017, p.6, paragraph 26). On these occasions, I relied on notes taken during the event or immediately afterwards. Roger Sanjek (cited by Lecompte and Schensul, 1999, p.31) refers to short notes taken during an event as 'mental notes kept ... until such time as it is possible to actually write things down'. It is not necessarily immediately clear which observations may become significant. Cindi Katz (2013, p.762) observes that many kinds of information and knowledge are gathered during the research process, 'only some of which makes it into our texts… some materials get stuck, constituted as marginal, imagined as private musings'. It is difficult to ensure sufficient accuracy from journal notes to use these as verbatim quotes, however, they are invaluable for recording ideas.

Digital recording of interviews may facilitate accurate notetaking, but the negative elements of formal methods may be exacerbated. Such recording may increase the tendency for what David Gauntlett (2007, p.97) describes as the 'artificial kind of talk' generated by the 'formal contexts of an interview or focus group'. Instead, he advocates prolonged informal time for conversation and reflection. This enables people to tell 'their story in their way from their point of view by their own agency' (Christian, 2012, p.8). In this study, I found that the collaborative planning of events facilitated informal discussion in which important insights were shared. Similar opportunities for reflection may be achieved through walking interviews (Lachauer, 1997; O'Neill, 2017) and collaborative art projects (Yeo and Bolton, 2008, 2013). Irrespective of the method used, it is important to develop what Les Back (2007) calls the 'art of listening', beyond hearing the answers to pre-determined questions. In research with asylum seekers, it is important to avoid methods resembling the 'coercive scrutiny' (Sinha and Back, 2014, p.474) of the immigration system, in which the 'wrong' answer may have fatal consequences. This may preclude the use of formal recording and individual interviews.

Irrespective of the methods used or my assertions of anonymity, it is assumed that there will be reluctance to 'express critical or dissenting opinions' (Berghold and Thomas, 2012) with potentially negative consequences. Interviewees may avoid what they perceive as potential damage to reputation in the community (Jacobsen and Landau, 2003, p.192). This is particularly important in the context of the precarious circumstances in which many asylum seekers live. However, in addition, employees may be similarly reluctant to criticise those on whom they depend. Honest and open contribution is hindered by wider power inequalities.

Analysis and relevance of findings

Drawing on the poststructuralist discourse theory described in Chapter 2, analysis focused on the discursive logics underpinning the 'institution, contestation and sedimentation of social practices and regimes' (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.159). In

practical terms, I used NVivo to code and organise ideas and citations from interview transcripts and notes into initial themes, maintaining links to the original transcript (see for example Waters, 2016). I explored the diversity of ideas, including those I considered misguided or inaccurate. Contradictions between different people's accounts would be problematic if the purpose were to arrive at a single truth rather than the diversity of perceptions.

Using interview transcripts, I explored how people with different subject positions represent 'the problems' associated with disability and forced migration, and how these representations shape policy solutions. The strategy is informed by questions adapted from the work of Bacchi (2009) and her later work with Susan Goodwin:

> What is the problem represented to be?
>
> What assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?
>
> Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?
>
> What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?
>
> How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced? (2016, p.20)

It is reiterated that the focus of this study was on the diversity rather than the prevalence of ideas, however, as Jacobsen and Landau warn, data regarding marginalised groups such as refugees may be:

> assumed by the media or policymakers to represent the totality of a refugee population's experience. Researchers must, consequently, make a concerted effort to ensure that the limits of their data and analyses do not create the wrong impression. (2003, p.190)

Therefore, it is necessary to stress that this study provides no evidence as to the prevalence of any experience or idea. Glynos and Howarth make clear the objectives and limitations of their approach to poststructuralist discourse theory:

> naturalists offer the prospect of a causal explanation by subsuming the phenomena under universal laws… hermeneuticists explain via the use of particular contextualised interpretations, our approach conceives of explanation in terms of a critical and articulated assemblage of logics. (2007, p.164)

This analysis is not focused on proving or quantifying facts, but on investigating the impact of hegemonic power inequalities and how they are, or could be, contested.

Beyond the use of appropriate theories and methods for classifying data, in the light of the 'triple imperative' (Block et al., 2013, p.84), it is important to ask whether the findings are useful to those who have contributed. Margaret LeCompte (2000, p.152) urges researchers to continually ask themselves, 'Do I, the researcher, really understand and describe what I am studying in the same way that those who live it do?'. I suggest this is unlikely and not my goal. Instead, I seek to empathise with those with lived experience, to learn from the insights of different contributors, and thereby to improve understanding of current experiences and how injustices might be contested.

Ethical considerations

Ethical issues were considered throughout the study. I obtained ethical clearance from the University of Bath and follow the BSA (2017) and ESRC (2019) guidelines. However, as Marmo (2013, p.86) warns, 'research ethics in this field of study may be used as a canvas that researchers can stretch to fit their purposes and needs'. There are particular ethical risks associated with working with people living in vulnerable circumstances (see for example Sinha and Back, 2014). The impact of interconnected inequalities of power and opportunity require further consideration.

The risk of detrimental impact from involvement in research requires consideration. I was concerned about causing resentment by bringing together people with different entitlements. However, it may be that such disparities are so omnipresent that more contact makes little difference. Perhaps a more avoidable problem is the issue of raising false expectations (British Sociological Association (BSA), 2017, p.6, paragraph 23). When first told about the event that we were organising, das8 responded that she could not come because campaigning involves opening oneself to hope and therefore also to disappointment. This was a risk she was not able to take. After the event, one person (das4) was angry that despite her contribution, nothing changed. This highlights three connected issues. Firstly, as someone who has grown up in the UK, I assumed it was clear that however 'successful' a meeting, it would not resolve an individual asylum claim. Secondly, I realise that I had wrongly assumed that the interpreter would explain the context beyond straight interpretation of the words. Furthermore, describing Gramsci's perspective, Crehan (2016, p.64) explains, 'every language contains the elements of a conception of the world and of a culture'. If someone does not understand the dominant language, in this case English, they may also not understand dominant social norms and assumed common-sense. In this regard, the lack of language frames a person in the position of the subaltern. Thirdly, as another asylum seeker (das8) explained to me the asylum system makes people desperate, which makes them hold onto any possibility of hope, however irrational this may appear to an outsider. Similarly, Marmo (2013, p.12) argues that if inherent power inequalities frame the researcher as 'the powerful entity *in charge of* the outcome of the research', then this 'will develop an expectation (that sufferance is alleviated)'. The risk of raising false hopes is therefore not addressed simply by stating a contrary intention.

The practicalities of informed consent require consideration. I sought informed consent from all contributors to individual or group interviews (see Appendix 4) as laid out in paragraph 29 of the BSA ethical guidelines. I stressed the voluntary nature of the interaction, that each person controls what they divulge, and that consent could be withdrawn. Where there are language barriers, good interpreters are essential to informed consent. However, as Mackenzie et al. (2007) point out, informed consent is complex when working with people living in precarious circumstances. When asked if she would contribute to a meeting about immigration and disability, das11 hesitated before agreeing. This person was a friend, which made it easier to probe than had she been a stranger. She elaborated:

> I feel too exhausted ... prefer to do nothing ... why don't citizens get asked to talk about how tough life is... when you are seeking asylum it puts you in the limelight.

This highlights the importance of probing to ensure that the option of refusing consent is fully understood.

Complications were experienced regarding consent for involvement in the films. Separate consent was obtained for the film, as advised in paragraph 27 of BSA ethical guidelines (2017, p.6) including the choice as to whether a person's face should be recognisable and where the film could be shown. One person (das3) asked for their face, name, and experiences to be known by as many people as possible. However, the day before a public event, the voluntary sector agency supporting this person cited funding concerns and asked for their employee's consent to be removed, also claiming that das3 now wished to be made anonymous. It was not possible to contact this person directly to verify his decision. However, if a person depends on an organisation's support, then it may be difficult to counter organisational wishes. The factors prompting the organisational withdrawal of consent are discussed in Chapter 7 and highlight the impediments to overt criticism. In response to this situation, I worked with others to create a protocol for collaboration between funded voluntary sector agencies, unpaid service users and activists. This raised questions of the meaning of consent in the context of power inequality.

The issue of anonymity raises further ethical considerations. When working with people with minority identities for extended periods, it becomes likely that other people become aware of the involvement. For those who chose to share their ideas in public meetings, the use of films enabled people to share ideas while hiding their identities. It should, however, not be assumed that anonymity is necessarily advantageous. Previous BSA guidelines (2002) asserted the value of 'automatic anonymity for participants'. Sinha and Back (2014, p.12) criticise an 'unthinking default position' of automatic anonymity, likening it to 'an anxious symptom of ethical hypochondria'. As Lorde writes, 'your silence will not protect you'. Disabled asylum seekers' perspectives on the value or risk of publicity are discussed in Chapter 6. The possibility that publicity may help a person's fight for justice, means that there are ethical reasons to enable people to speak out if they so wish.

Beyond the needs of research contributors, there is a need to consider ethics of self-care for researchers engaged with traumatic issues. The vicarious impact is incomparable to those for whom there is no option of removing themselves from the situation. However, the potential for guilt, despair and sense of inadequacy should not be underestimated (Lee, 1993; Harris and Roberts, 2003). During this study, I organised a support group for researchers working on traumatic issues. This was facilitated by a psychotherapist from the Trauma Foundation. The funding for this resulted in the sessions largely taking place while I was away and therefore unable to fully engage. However, when immersed in what felt like relentless and extreme examples of injustice, whether in relation to the injustice experienced by disabled

asylum seekers, or the responses of policymakers and services providers, there were many times during this research process when I needed space to 'rant'. Supervisory support was invaluable in this regard. This need may not be traditionally considered academic, as Holloway states: 'there is no room for the scream in academic discourse' (2002, p.3). At a conference organised by the Trauma Foundation (2016), it was suggested that dealing with traumatic issues arising from a person's work is as essential as miners arguing for washing to take place during work time. If researchers rely on the support of family and friends, it risks distorting these relationships as well as raising ethical issues of anonymity.

The injustices at the core of this research are, however, not simply part of the findings but also the research motivator. As Holloway writes:

> When we write or when we read, it is easy to forget that the beginning is not the word, but the scream. Faced with the mutilation of human lives by capitalism, the scream of sadness, a scream of horror, a scream of anger, a scream of refusal. (2002, p.1)

Emotional responses to such work are therefore inevitable but must be channelled in useful directions. Lorde (1988) asserts that 'caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare'. I realise that for me 'political warfare', and the accompanying solidarity, is *itself* an act of self-care. The solidarity and sense of engagement associated with bringing together the asylum sector and disabled people's movement were essential to the research design. These elements also enabled me, at least temporarily, to reject the potentially traumatic effects of being an impotent observer and instead to direct emotion to contributing to political alternatives. However, the difficulties with political activism as a form of self-care are that it is time-consuming, depends on others' engagement, and does not always proceed in positive directions, as will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Positionality

My core assumptions and personal background were discussed at the outset, however, the inevitable impact of positionality (see for example Pratt, 1997; Sultana, 2007) on the research rationale and design necessitates more detailed consideration.

My combined academic/activist motivation leads me, perhaps naively, to perceive disabled asylum seekers as people with whom I work in solidarity, rather than as 'participants' in my study. The feasibility of such a goal requires further consideration. I am frustrated at my failure to maintain contact with people who contributed to this study. The words of das9 reverberate for me. He initially declined to be involved, saying he knew what would happen: I would ask lots of questions, get the information that I need, then I would disappear and forget that he ever existed. I do not forget the ongoing daily injustices that are experienced, but my geographical location and wider responsibilities, make regular connections difficult. It is therefore understandable if people felt used for my academic purposes.

Beyond what I perceive as personal failings to maintain these relationships, my goals of solidarity and equality are counter to hegemonic discursive representation of 'subjects', 'cases' or 'data' to be collected in an external metaphorical 'field'. Such discourse suggests a detachment which is rarely, if ever, applicable. As Cindi Katz (1994, p.67) puts it, 'we are always already in the field', or as Marinella Marmo (2013, p.96) argues, a researcher 'is not an abstract entity but is part of this external context'. Discursive representation of the researcher as an impartial expert, observing 'cases' in the 'field', risks reinforcing the systemic othering being investigated. Such an approach might obscure interconnections and the ways in which researchers may be among those implicated in accounts of inequalities. Whatever the language or research motivations, as Marmo (2013, p.95) argues, 'in the relationship between researcher and research subject, the powerless remain the asylum seekers. And the researcher is in the dominant position'. Such inequalities are not exclusive to the research relationship but are a consequence of the very injustices being observed.

As outlined in the previous chapter, according to social constructivism, researchers' assumptions need to be placed in the context of the experiences and interpretations which have shaped them. My experiences of disability, migration and involvement in the voluntary sector undoubtedly shape my perceptions and provide some insights into the culture, assumptions and limitations which are faced. However, such limited commonalities could become problematic if exaggerated (Worth, 2008, p.310) and if I believed that I had automatic insight into the 'lifeworld's' (Husserl, 1936) of disabled asylum seekers, voluntary sector employees or anyone else. Furthermore, lack of commonality is not necessarily a hurdle. As noted by Sandhu et al. (2017, p.374) 'some people do not like disclosing information to people from the same or similar cultures, as they may feel "judged"'. Sometimes, 'a sense of familiarity and rapport' (ibid) based on overt commonalities between interviewers and interviewees may enable access. My white, British, middle-class, apparently non-disabled appearance may facilitate access to government institutions. Home Office staff were initially keen to collaborate. In an interview in 2015, one high ranking policy officer asserted his commitment to improve the situation for disabled asylum seekers insofar as this can be achieved within the context of immigration law (Yeo, 2015b). This willingness appeared to reduce as the differences in our political goals became apparent.

Human judgements shape all research including this study. Interviewees with different subject positions may perceive me as the privileged 'other', an ignorant outsider, a potential risk or indeed an ally. Sometimes, judgements may be hidden or inconsequential, other times they frame what is divulged. On one occasion, an NGO employee asked whether I have ever 'sat in on a care assessment'. I said no, without correcting her assumption that I had not had one myself. This relates in part to Kitchin's (2010, p.34), observation that, 'disabled people will only tell partial stories to a non-disabled researcher for fear of embarrassment or lack of empathy'. I may have been more open with someone with whom I was sure of commonalities, however, my focus was on her perspective not asserting my own. Yet, although I have never faced the

struggles for survival routine to many disabled asylum seekers, my experiences of professionals presuming to understand my priorities better than I did, are significant to my political perspective. When I learn of disregard for other people's needs, my anger is, in part, personal. My lived experiences, like those of anyone else, shape what I consider worth asking, what I notice and, it can be assumed, what I consider so normal as to be invisible.

Methodological limitations and conclusions

The limitations of this research methodology should be understood in the context of the research assumptions and purpose. The poststructuralist assumption that there is no single reality, has been criticised for allowing researchers to 'find what they expect to find' (Stubbs, 1997). Furthermore, Jacobsen and Landau (2003, p.187) warn of a risk that when activist and academic goals are combined, researchers know what they want to say and come away from the research having 'proved' it. However, research without activist ambitions may also risk bias in attempting to prove a researcher's hypothesis correct. A basic prerequisite of research should be that any hypothesis 'could be proven wrong' (2003, p.191). The retroductive approach makes such bias less relevant, as the goal is not to prove, or disprove, pre-existing hypotheses, but to contribute to effective contestation.

The action research element of this work may contribute to the ethical commitment that research should contribute to mitigating the problem being investigated (Jacobsen and Landau, 2003). However, this may also raise false expectations of change, framing myself as researcher as having 'something to offer' (Marmo, 2013, p.15). The relative power, bestowed in these ways, combines with wider inequalities associated with different subject positions. The concept of power is used here in a Foucauldian sense:

> power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual … attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognise and which others have to recognise in him. (1983, p.212)

My capacity, and the way this is perceived, is inevitably shaped by my subject position and the associated relative power.

The core flaw of this research methodology then becomes the failure to secure meaningful individual or systemic change. As Fleming and Ward assert:

> Social action research involves a responsibility not to leave the participants and the stakeholders high and dry at the end of the research process… not knowing …what actions to take towards change. (2004, p.166)

Together with others, I tried and failed to prevent das17 being deported away from his family, friends, and means of survival. He rang me several times from detention to discuss what to do. On one occasion he also asked if I could help a person, he had met facing similar injustice. I refused, not because I doubted the injustice, but because I recognised my impotence against the ever more examples of horrendous injustice.

The research methodology resulted in a difficult balance between responding to the urgency of such needs, attempting to use the action research approach to contribute to change, while investigating underlying causes and possible solutions. The failure to secure meaningful change can be attributed to multiple factors, as will be discussed in the final chapter. However, the result remains that in this regard the research methodology has been largely unsuccessful at the time of writing.

Beyond the wider research capacity, there may be limitations stemming from who was involved and how. Motivation to actively collaborate may depend on a sense of common purpose. I avoid overtly expressing my standpoint, aware of the need to avoid what Danieli and Woodhams (2005, p.290) refer to as pressure on research subjects to 'tow the party line'. However, this is not necessarily productive. One activist (udc5) was reluctant to be involved before establishing my political position and objectives. Meanwhile, people may be less likely to actively contribute if sensing different motivation to my own. However, while I would have liked to include people with greater variety of perspectives, it was not essential to investigating how hegemonic discourse could be more effectively contested.

This research was designed to understand the causes of the injustice faced by disabled asylum seekers, and to contribute to improving the situation. For this purpose, I now turn to investigate the discursive logics (Glynos and Howarth, 2007) used in public discourse and by people with different subject positions. I analyse how policy discourse has become hegemonic and how it could be effectively contested. The success of this approach in relation to the research questions is explored in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4. UK government policies: How discursive representations of problems associated with disability and forced migration shape current entitlements.

Realist policy analysis

> concentrates too much on what those who inhabit policy think about and misses and fails to attend to what they do not think about. Thus, we need to appreciate the way in which policy ensembles, collections of related policies, exercise power through a production of "truth" and "knowledge". (Ball, 2006, p.48)

As I have explained, the purpose of this study is not to quantify or 'prove' the existence of injustices associated with disability and migration in the UK. Nonetheless the motivation for this study and the reason that government policies matter is because of their human impact. Therefore, before analysing government policy discourse I begin with a short example of the impact of current policy.

At the end of a focus group with Home Office staff members, a senior employee asked for my view on their safeguarding policy. I explained that seeking to identify people eligible for safeguarding does not address the cause of the problem. I described how, after his asylum claim was refused, das7 attempted to take his own life. This was not the result of being more innately vulnerable than anyone else, but of there being no apparent solution to his struggles. The safeguarding team may, or may not, have been able to prevent him from jumping off a bridge, but this would not have addressed the cause of his despair. The Home Office employee responded by saying that this person should have been informed of the potential for 'voluntary return'. When I last saw das7, he was in the process of appealing the asylum refusal. His mental and physical health had deteriorated to such a degree that he needed help with daily living. His 'hope' for appeal was based on evidence that his mother was so seriously ill in his country of origin, that she would be unable to care for him, if he were returned. The potential for 'voluntary return' would clearly not be a solution to his struggles. Furthermore, these experiences are not the result of oversight but the result of current policy.

Understanding the determinants of current distinction of entitlements is essential to developing effective contestation. The restrictions and inequalities of formal entitlement experienced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees in the UK are shaped by government policy. This first analytical chapter draws on elements of poststructural discourse theory, applying the logics of critical explanation (Glynos and Howarth, 2007) to investigate the discursive struggles for hegemony that underpin contemporary immigration policy and welfare reform. Analysis focuses on the dominant logics of explanation used to represent the problem which these policies seek to address, and what is thereby obscured. In this investigation, 'immigration policy' refers to legislation determining the entitlements of migrants. Discursive representation of disability is

considered largely in relation to welfare reform as this is considered the most significant change to contemporary entitlements. Subsequent chapters investigate how the hegemony of the elite discourse of policymakers is reinforced or contested by people with different subject positions regarding implementation of policy and practice, before considering the perspectives of those with lived experience of the impact. The final chapter then explores how such discursive representations of the problem frame perceived solutions, and how current inequalities could be more effectively contested.

This chapter begins by briefly considering hegemonic discourse following World War Two, regarding entitlements associated with immigration and disability, as this forms the context for subsequent developments. Analysis then turns to legislative White Papers and political speeches, in which the arguments underpinning contemporary immigration policy or welfare reform are summarised. Detailed analysis of the discursive struggles shaping immigration policy begins with the White Paper: 'Fairer, faster and firmer' (1998) because the resultant policy changes continue to shape current entitlements. This White Paper frames asylum and immigration as a threat to be reduced through withdrawing access to the welfare state. Despite the particularly life-changing impact of these restrictions on disabled asylum seekers, the invisibility of the 'other' is affirmed by the absence of explicit reference to disability. The discursive representation underpinning this White Paper is then compared with the VPRS. This scheme was introduced by James Brokenshire, Minister for Immigration and Security (2014) under the coalition government of Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties (2010-2015). The discursive framing of these ostensibly contrasting approaches to immigration policy is analysed. Both approaches highlight assumed distinctions of human worth, while contributing to the dislocation of logics of individual rights and collective responsibility, which had framed post-World War Two discourse underpinning the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Attention then turns to representation of disability, focusing on key documents in the development of welfare reforms. Analysis begins with a speech by then Prime Minister Tony Blair (1999) regarding his vision for welfare reform, in which the collective responsibility of the post-war era was replaced by the individual responsibility of neoliberalism. The enactment of this agenda is analysed in relation to two White Papers considered central to contemporary welfare reform. The first, 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services' (2006) focuses on social care provision and was introduced by the New Labour government led by Blair. The second, 'Universal Credit: welfare that works' (2010) focuses on financial support from the welfare state and was introduced by the Coalition government led by David Cameron and Nick Clegg. The impact of these cross-party policies provoked investigation by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This chapter therefore includes analysis of this attempted reassertion of rights. Finally, this chapter considers the impact of these policy struggles on intersectional entitlements associated with disability and migration.

4.1 The historical context shaping assumed social logics of common-sense

Any discursive explanation builds on what has gone before. Therefore, I briefly consider the historical context in which contemporary policy was introduced. I do not seek to replicate existing analyses of the historical roots of inequalities associated with migration (see for example: Spencer, 2002; Anderson, B.L., 2013; Goodfellow, 2019) or disability (Borsay, 2005; Hampton, 2016; Clifford, 2020). Instead, I summarise the core developments in both sectors, focusing on the post-World War Two era, a time in which normative discourse of human rights became hegemonic. I focus on the dominant discursive logics adopted and how these relate to discursive representations shaping current entitlements.,

The political hegemony following World War Two included international agreements designed to prevent repetition of global conflict. Discourse of 'us' and 'them', on which war relies, was contested with international agreements such as the United Nations Charter (1945), Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 1948) and the Refugee Convention (1951). In the UK, the National Assistance Act (1948) and the National Health Service (Bevan, 1952) were introduced, providing support to all, free at the point of delivery. These international and national agreements framed notions of human rights as 'unquestionably good' (Meister, 2011, p.20). Beyond these agreements, the normative value of human rights became core to the liberal hegemony. This is not to suggest a halcyon era of equality and justice. As Moyn's (2014) analysis indicates, the human rights promoted in these international agreements never extended to economic equality. Furthermore, Goodfellow argues that:

> the shameful present, in which … asylum seekers are left destitute on the streets, is often compared to an imagined past, as activists and outraged politicians indignantly ask: what has this country become? The problem is, this is the kind of place it has long been. (2019, p.46)

Human rights violations and inequalities did not disappear in the post-war era despite these political declarations.

In the UK, the post-war era was also the time of the introduction of the welfare state, providing greater support in times of need, as proposed in the report by William Beveridge (1942). However, the Beveridge report never addressed the disadvantages associated with disability. Clifford (2020, p.47) explains, 'prevailing attitudes towards disabled people altered relatively little after the Second World War'. Beveridge 'failed to guarantee against the poverty and financial exclusion of disabled people' (ibid). Furthermore, Pat Thane argues that to attempt to explain the introduction of the UK welfare state:

> as a manifestation of altruism, of a desire to remove poverty … renders mysterious the fact that much poverty remains, that those in greatest need have often gained least. (2013, p.3)

The lack of impact on ‘those in greatest need’ may be, in part, explained by the maintenance of exclusions to entitlement.

The ‘universal’ nature of the Declaration of Human Rights was neither fully comprehensive in its conception, nor in its national implementation. The Declaration only includes cursory reference to disability, regarding the right ‘to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability’ (article 25, 1948). The lack of consideration of the pervasive barriers associated with disability is reflected in UK legislation. In his analysis of the development of disability policy after World War Two, Jameel Hampton (2016, p.53) argues that disabled people experienced ‘comparative exclusion from the welfare state’. He explains that barriers to paid employment resulted in lack of National Insurance contributions and reduced eligibility for benefit payments, thereby exacerbating inequalities. This ‘exclusion from the welfare state’ was mirrored in wider legislation. The 1944 Education Act framed disabled children as distinct, with numbers in segregated educational institutions increasing from 38,499 in 1945 to 106,367 in 1972 (Borsay, 2012, p.1). The human rights of disabled children were not represented as equal to those of ‘normal’ non-disabled children.

Hegemonic representation of disabled people as unworthy of human rights was, however, contested. In the UK, rejection of the continued segregation of disabled people prompted the emergence of the social model (Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS), 1976; Oliver, 1983). At an international level, campaigns led to several high-profile agreements, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975), the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981) and later the UNCRPD (2006). However, Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.148) argue that the impact of such rights-based discourse on individual disabled people’s lives was ‘minimal’. These agreements contested access barriers associated with disability, rather than contesting common-sense prioritisation of profit maximisation which shapes capitalist distinctions of human worth. The maintenance of social logics of the primacy of economically productive, non-disabled, citizens shapes both contemporary welfare reform and immigration policy. Restrictions and inequalities brought in after the above agreements, required relatively minor adjustments to political logics determining who is entitled to support, rather than any fundamental dislocation of common-sense social logics.

The denial of entitlement to post-war rights-based discourse were initially targeted at disabled people rather than migrants. However, the existence of exclusions facilitated the extension to wider targets. Since the 1951 Refugee Convention, the UK has passed 19 legislative Acts of Parliament specifically reducing the rights of immigrants. These Acts discursively frame migrants as the ‘other’, a minority who threaten common-sense social logics, within which UK citizens constitute the majority assumed to have prime legitimacy. Normative framing of minority: majority status does not exclusively depend on migration or minority status. The minority of migrants who bring significant amounts of capital is not framed as a threat by such legislation, despite having greater capacity

to influence life for the majority. Instead, as Appadurai (2006, p.48) explains, fear of the minority is directed at 'the weak'. The apparent threat is not migration per se, but, as Vickers (2012) asserts, migration for reasons external to capitalist prioritisation of profit. As such, the othering of disabled people and migrants may not stem from being a numerical minority but from being perceived as a burden on the capitalist economy.

To understand what prevented the realisation of 'universal' human rights, enshrined in the UN declarations, it is necessary to consider what underpinned these agreements. The immediate aftermath of war was characterised by determination to avoid further conflict, together with a greater capacity for imagining alternatives, resulting from the inherent change associated with soldiers returning from war. This combined with heightened awareness of the fragility of national borders and the potential for the burgeoning rejection of capitalism in the Soviet Union to gain popularity in the UK. The rights-based discourse of the post-war era may have stemmed from what Pat Thane (2013, p.3) refers to as 'questions of political and social order' forestalling a potential moment of more fundamental contestation. However, as Glynos, Klimecki and Wilmott (2012, p.298) explain, 'while the radical contingency of social reality might become more clearly visible in moments of crisis and dislocation, it does not follow that structural transformation ensues'. The overt discursive agenda was shaped by political logics of rights, articulated with, rather than dislocating, ongoing social logics of the primacy of non-disabled, economically productive citizens. Those framed as outside the realm of normality, such as disabled people or migrants, could therefore be granted lesser entitlement without contesting rights-based political logics. Without assertions of equality or the commonalities of human need, further exclusions required only simple adjustments to the borders of entitlement, rather than discursive dislocation of core social logics.

Contemporary discursive representation of the entitlements of disabled asylum seekers and refugees must be seen in the context of post-war rights-based political logics, complete with their uncontested common-sense exclusions. Analysis of current intersectional entitlements focuses on the discursive struggles shaping key policy interventions. Attention begins with immigration policy, before turning to disability and the intersectional impact.

4.2 The discursive struggles shaping current immigration policy

Analysis of discursive representations underpinning current entitlements associated with disability and migration focuses on two policy documents: the 1998 White Paper in which asylum seekers' rights to access the welfare state were withdrawn, and the VPRS (2014), in which people fleeing the Syrian crisis were selected for resettlement to the UK based on apparent vulnerability. In the context of UK government policy, the prioritisation of citizens of the nation-state, the territory over which the government has jurisdiction, is unsurprising. Furthermore, in the context of a capitalist economy, it is

also to be expected that policies are underpinned by assumed goals of profit maximisation.

My analysis of the dominant discursive logics shaping immigration policy will begin with the political logics shaping overt debate.

Political logics of defence – 'Fairer, Faster and Firmer' 1998.

The UK government's White Paper, 'Fairer, faster and firmer' (1998) explains the rationale for the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999) which would follow. It was introduced under the New Labour Government led by Prime Minister Tony Blair. This legislation forms but one element of what Goodfellow (2019, p.7) refers to as 'decades of exclusionary politics'. However, it marked a shift with particularly acute implications for disabled people: asylum seekers lost the right to access the welfare state, including compensation for disability-related costs. In addition to reduced income, loss of entitlement to Disability Living Allowance removed eligibility for multiple additional discounts and services, from travel cards to reduced prices at sporting facilities. Asylum seekers began to receive support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), with provision set at lower than the minimum necessary for citizens:

> people who have not established their right to be in the UK should not have access to welfare provision on the same basis as those whose citizenship or status here gives them an entitlement to benefits when in need. (Great Britain. The Home Office, 1998, p.35, paragraph 8.18).

Asylum seekers are represented as needing sufficient support such that they 'are not left destitute, but which minimise the attractions of the UK to economic migrants' (1998, p.3). This sufficientarian (Frankfurt, 1987; Gosseries, 2011) goal of avoiding destitution contrasts with Bevan's universalist conception of entitlement to healthcare:

> emotional concern for individual life is the most significant quality of a civilised human being. It is not achieved when limited to people of a certain colour, race, religion, nation or class. (1952, p.177)

Bevan warns that if 'emotional concern' is limited to certain people, it facilitates 'monstrous cruelty or at best indifference to others' (ibid). His warning, almost 50 years before this White Paper, proves increasingly prescient. Despite espousing the value of integration (1998, p.17, paragraph 2.16) the White Paper established systematic segregation. Asylum seekers also lost the right to choose where to live. Instead, people would be dispersed to low-cost accommodation, potentially away from friends, family, and support networks.

The 1998 White Paper was introduced soon after the start of the New Labour government (1997-2010), at a time when the rhetoric of the social model of disability (Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS), 1976; Oliver, 1983) was becoming increasingly hegemonic. The White Paper explicitly restricted access to services for people without citizenship. Despite the acute relevance of the social

model and the life-changing implications of losing financial recognition of the costs associated with disability, the only reference to disability in the 1998 White Paper relates to what it is not: local authorities would no longer be responsible for providing support to '*healthy and able bodied*' asylum seekers (paragraph 8.23). The implication is that local authorities retain responsibility for the *other*, those who are *not* 'healthy and able bodied'. The existence and needs of the 'other' appear so insignificant as not to warrant direct reference. As Ball (2006, p.14) argues, realist policy analysis 'concentrates too much on what those who inhabit policy think about and misses and fails to attend to what they do not think about'. The omission of direct reference reinforces the disregard for disabled asylum seekers. The removal of entitlement to services is framed as a 'solution' to the 'problem' of migration, as if unrelated to wider political discourse of the need to address the 'problem' of disabling inaccessible services. Disabled asylum seekers are not only financially disadvantaged, but in terms of government policy, these are people who, 'do not count' (Rancière, 1999). These are the unmentioned 'other', the unreferenced side-effect of the need to reduce numbers of migrants and assert 'control'.

The overt agenda of the White Paper focuses on the political logics of the need to control and defend borders and resources. These are complemented by fantasmatic logics of a threat posed to 'our' enjoyment (Stavrakakis, 2005; Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008) of that which is rightfully 'ours'. Removal of entitlement to the welfare state is presented as a means for 'us' to assert 'control' of territorial and social boundaries (Bertram, 2014, p.131). This builds on the inherent contradictions of liberal democracy (Mouffe, 2005a; Rancière, 2006) discussed in Chapter 1. Entitlement based on citizenship contains what Amanda Nielsen (2016, p.26) describes as 'inherent *duality'*. It may be *in*clusive of other citizens, but it is *ex*clusive of non-citizens. The removal of entitlement to access the welfare state for people seeking asylum assumes distinctions of human worth. Hegemonic distinctions between those *seeking* and those *granted* refugee status are asserted, with 40 references to 'genuine' travellers, counterposed by reference to 'abusive' travellers, such as those moving for 'economic betterment' (1998, p.23). Social logics of the primacy of profit are highlighted by the assertion of financial means as an indicator of human worth. The Paper seeks to avoid disruption to 'people travelling abroad for *legitimate* purposes including business, study and holidays' (emphasis added, 1998, p.9). Furthermore, a bond scheme is proposed, whereby a 'sponsor would be asked to deposit a financial security' (1998, p.24). The implication is that people with money have 'genuine' reasons to travel, whereas people escaping poverty travel for 'abusive' reasons. The implied equivalence between wealth and human worth can be explained by Bauman's (2004) assertion of the systematic creation of 'wasted lives' within capitalism.

The power inequalities inherent in distinctions of entitlement are affirmed by a proposed covenant with rules to be obeyed. The inherent inequality and disciplinary power (Foucault, 1979) of rules set by an elite, for all to follow, are reminiscent of school rules or Bible commandments. These rules include: 'tell the truth' and 'obey the law' (1998,

p.33), in no way unique to UK society, yet presented as if an indicator of 'integration into British society' (1998, p.41, paragraph 10.1). As Schinkel (2013) argues, focusing on the Netherlands but with applicability to the UK, integration assumes the existence of a monolithic and accessible social order. Framing integration as an issue of individual choice obscures the systematic segregation inherent in withdrawal of access to the welfare state. If responsibility is located with the individual, then blame for the failure to integrate is also located with the individual. This reinforces the framing of some humans as unworthy, thereby justifying lower entitlements.

This White Paper was published half a century after the UN Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) and the Refugee Convention (1951). At this stage in the 'archaeology' of immigration policy, it appears to have been necessary to maintain discursive reference to the political logic of rights, despite systematically dismantling their application. The task is presented not as contesting the logics of 'rights' to seek refuge, but as distinguishing between who is deserving of such rights and who must be controlled. There are 14 references to the assumed 'good' of human rights, juxtaposed with seven references to people without rights, thereby contradicting the universality of human rights. The need to reduce the apparent burden associated with migrant numbers and use of services is represented as if legitimising the restrictions of rights. Asylum seekers are positioned as if distinct from the wider population, with the removal of rights thereby facilitated without requiring contestation, or dislocation, of rights-based logics. Representation of racism exemplifies the inherent contradictions of this approach: support is removed from migrants (a disproportionate number of whom come from ethnic minorities), while also declaring commitment to 'improving access to public services for ethnic minorities' (1998, p.17, paragraph 2.15). It is as if the racist impact of these policies could be countered by asserting objectives of race equality (1998, p.16, paragraph 2.13). As Mondon and Winter (2020, p.61) explain, overt rejection of illiberal racism serves to perpetuate the acceptability of a system 'built on discrimination and privilege' (2020, p.6). Lack of recognition of the systematic barriers to race equality inherent in migration policy is highlighted by reference to measures for '*encouraging* citizenship' (emphasis added, 1998, p.17, paragraph 2.16). The problem is thereby framed as if an issue of individual motivation, rather than of inequality.

Discursive representation of the need for control is presented as if modernising, rather than dislocating, the rights-based logics of the 1951 Convention. The then Home Secretary, Jack Straw, refers to the scale of migration having risen beyond that anticipated by the 1951 Refugee Convention. There are 38 references to the need to modernise, while upholding a fantasmatic 'tradition' (1998, p.33) of generosity. Discourse of modernisation is also the justification for an increased role for the voluntary sector (1998, p.33, paragraph 8.3). This reflects wider neoliberal shifts of responsibility from the state to the voluntary sector (Bebbington, Hickey and Mitlin, 2008). This may be framed as modernising but is deeply problematic. If the voluntary sector comes to rely on state support, then organisational survival may depend on withholding criticism. Furthermore, reliance on charitable support builds precarity and

inequity into the system; rights can be demanded, whereas gifts depend on being perceived as worthy. The discursive shift from rights to charity, and from statutory to voluntary sector, are core to understanding the restrictions faced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees, as becomes clear from the policy analysis in this chapter. By discursively articulating proposed changes with the modernisation of the 1951 Convention, potential contestation is implicitly framed as counter to the implied normativity of the modern age. The resultant lack of public criticism may affirm representations of the system as incontestable or as benign, such that systematic inequalities are perceived as inevitable, or as oversights.

Despite overt acceptance of the rights of refugees, the provisions of the White Paper dislocate their application. The paper includes provision for occasions when 'the Secretary of State considers that the circumstances of a particular case are exceptional' (1998, paragraph 115). The consequences of such unclear eligibility criteria will be discussed in relation to possible solutions in Chapter 7. Further provision for exceptional support is alluded to in the White Paper, with reference to the need for 'particular care' regarding 'physical and mental health' in detention policy (1998, p.49, paragraph 12.4). If an asylum seeker has been tortured, detention is to be avoided, and 'temporary admission' to the country is proposed. Notwithstanding the failure to systematically implement this approach (Burnett and Peel, 2001), the policy was discursively framed as if legitimately directing support towards those who are deserving. This provision directs support to people who have been tortured, as distinct from people with similar needs stemming from other causes. If eligibility for support is determined by factors beyond human need, the result is that potential issues of life and death become determined by the *cause*, rather than the *existence* of need. The precarity of such distinctions of entitlement would later become core to welfare reform. However, it is reiterated that the significant deterioration in provision for disabled asylum seekers resulted from the assertion of political logics of control, and the extension of exclusions from entitlement to support, which had always existed.

Before considering how such discourse is reflected in welfare reform, it is necessary to consider a scheme which, in relation to immigration policy, prioritised discursive logics of generosity towards selected people above logics of defence.

Political logics of generosity - The Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme (VPRS) 2014.

It would be wrong to suggest that political logics of defence and fantasmatic logics of threat are consistently prominent in UK immigration policy. The VPRS shifted emphasis from political logics of defence to logics of generosity towards selected people, framed as worthy of support. The scheme was introduced in response to cross-party calls to support people fleeing conflict in Syria (Smith, B., Gower and Bardens, 2014). Hegemonic discursive representation of migration as a threat to be controlled, hindered increased acceptance of refugees. Instead, the VPRS was established as a

discrete project selecting people framed as worthy, based on apparent vulnerability. Liberal Democrat, Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg (2014) explained that priority would go to 'women and girls who have experienced, or are at risk of, sexual violence; the elderly; survivors of torture and individuals with disabilities'. Explicit reference to disability contrasts with the 1998 White Paper. However, framing disability as an issue of vulnerability runs counter to the rights-based focus of the disabled people's movement (Morris, 2015) and the UNCRPD (2006). Selected people became entitled to *increased* entitlement, relative to asylum seekers. Those selected for the scheme would not have to navigate the defensive restrictions of the asylum system. Instead, the focus was on generosity. As Brokenshire (2014) explained, they would be:

> granted five years' Humanitarian Protection[1] with all the rights and benefits that go with that status, including access to public funds, access to the labour market and the possibility of family reunion.

In contrast, asylum seekers remained subject to the precarity associated with actual or potential destitution, detention, or deportation. Although unreferenced in Brokenshire's initial statement, support provided under the VPRS would diminish from the first year onwards, affirming that it is a temporary gift rather than dependant on need. In a similar manner to the 1998 White Paper, the focus on distinctions of individual worth and entitlement obscures collective responsibility to remove structural barriers, thereby further undermining the principles of the social model.

The foregrounding of fantasmatic logics of pride in 'our' kindness towards the exceptional needs of selected refugees served to legitimise the small numbers of people relative to the more generalised response from other states. The number of beneficiaries was initially therefore avoided, although Patrick Wintour (2014), writing for *The Guardian*, claimed that 'coalition sources' suggested it would be 'no more than 500'. More than 18 months after the introduction of the VPRS, the drowned body of Alan Kurdi, a Kurdish toddler found on a Greek beach on 2nd September 2015, 'provoked a remarkable and transnationally articulated demand for responsibility' (Perl and Strasser, 2018, p.508). Magdalena Hodalska (2018, p.210), scholar of media representation, argues that the change in public response towards refugees stemmed from the visual similarity between the image of Kurdi and 'any other boy in Europe'. His body:

> made the faraway conflict close and personal for the audience familiar with the images of boys dressed in T-shirts and shorts, but unfamiliar with the images of blood, debris, and shattered glass.

The apparent familiarity meant this child could not be dismissed as the 'other'. Furthermore, fantasmatic logics of threat appear incompatible with this image. The

[1] This status was later extended to being granted immediate refugee status.

apparently equalising impact of this familiarity provoked such calls for change that it temporarily appeared as if a moment of politics (Rancière, 1999, p.11) might ensue.

Before analysing what averted a moment of transformational politics, it is important to understand what *did* change. Public pressure for greater UK response caused a shift in hegemonic discourse of migration (Szczepanik, 2016; Kirkwood, 2017; Parker, Naper and Goodman, 2018). An apparent shift from political logics of defence to logics of generosity, complemented by fantasmatic logics of pride, was reflected in the language and actions of senior politicians. As referenced, when then UK Prime Minister David Cameron (2015a) referred to a 'swarm' of migrants wanting to come to Britain, he was suggesting the need for defensive measures. In contrast, on 7th September 2015, five days after Kurdi's death, Cameron (2015b) referred to being 'moved by the heart-breaking images', and committed to increasing the resettlement of Syrian refugees to 20,000 (BBC, 2015). It is inconceivable that Cameron was unaware that countless migrants had died before, or would die after this child, yet the image of a drowned toddler, followed by the surge of public pressure, resulted in policy change, and was presented as a source of pride. A civil servant (cs3) with managerial responsibility for the resettlement programme, explained in an interview that the criteria for selection were broadened, to include children, LGBTI and people with legal or physical protection needs. This increasingly broad definition of vulnerability suggests its role as a floating signifier (Butler, Laclau and Žižek, 2000, p.305), with fluid meaning. In the context of people fleeing conflict, such criteria serve not to significantly limit eligibility, but to assert discretionary criteria for state selection, rather than the individual's right to seek protection, as enshrined in the 1951 Convention.

The discursive logics of the VPRS must be understood in the context of wider discourse of immigration. The 1951 Convention enshrines legal obligations towards people fleeing persecution who arrive in the UK. However, there are no such obligations towards foreign nationals in third countries. The VPRS focus on selecting people labelled as vulnerable in third countries therefore evokes political logics of generosity, with the problem limited to determining who is worthy. These logics are reinforced by fantasmatic logics of pride, asserting that there is something special about 'us'. Reference to Britain's 'proud history' is repeated by people with diverse subject positions, as if it were an undisputable fact. Speaking in relation to the VPRS, Liberal Democrat Nick Clegg (2014) spoke of Britain's 'long and proud tradition of providing refuge at times of crisis'. Conservative Party Home Secretary Theresa May (2015) made three references to pride regarding the VPRS. Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper (2015), also referred to Britain's 'proud history', suggesting that denying support to refugees was not the 'British way'. Such cross-party hegemony is maintained outside Parliament. Then Chief Executive of the Refugee Council Maurice Wren (2014) called for greater support for Syrian refugees, linking this with the assertion of Britain's 'proud tradition of helping refugees'. The evocation of fantasmatic logics of national pride is not new or unique to the VPRS. As Tyler (2013, p.79)

observes, ‘one of the most powerful British national myths is that this state has an ancient and proud history of granting asylum to foreign nationals’. These myths rely on political logics of equivalence to an undefined period of British heroism. Repetition of discursive tropes of pride evokes patriotic notions of the superiority of a national populace, with implicit distinctions from the ‘other’.

In the contemporary context, notions of pride are particularly hard to justify with evidence. The VPRS may be compared with Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon which were all hosting over a million refugees that year, according to the UNHCR review of Global Trends in Forced Displacement (2015). The lack of substantive basis for discourse of pride obscures what Tyler (2013, p.80) refers to as the:

> double standards around the promotion of a liberal rhetoric of asylum, and the British government’s imperialist policies, which were producing increasing numbers of political and economic migrants.

However, notions of national pride are emotional and therefore unquantifiable. Taking a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective (Stavrakakis, 2005), discourse of generosity which merits donor pride facilitates the perpetual quest for fulfilment of enjoyment. The quest for enjoyment is essential to the struggles determining hegemonic policy discourse which shape current restrictions and inequalities. Scholar of forced migration, Alexander Betts (2017, p.74), argues that by focusing efforts on specific people, with tangible impact, resettlement programmes have a ‘cathartic’ role for those contributing. More generally, as Bekkers and Wiepking (2007, p.32) explain, giving can ‘alleviate feelings of guilt’, promoting positive self, or collective, image. Acts of generosity towards selected individuals affirm ‘our’ goodness, and therefore the fantasy that ‘our’ relative privilege is deserved and to be defended. In contrast, removing the barriers faced by disabled people, is less easily framed as generosity, and therefore provides less scope for catharsis or enjoyment.

The foregrounding of generosity, underpinned by fantasmatic logics of donor pride, is inherently unequal and precarious. Without rights, those wishing to access discretionary support must show gratitude by enjoying themselves enough to endorse our generosity and thereby facilitate our self-righteous enjoyment. However, in association with references to the burden on taxpayers (UK Great Britain. The Home Office, 1998), if beneficiaries (whether people seeking asylum or selected for the VPRS) appear to be enjoying themselves too much, then it may be framed as at ‘our’ expense. Stavrakakis (2005, p.77) explains that ‘The Other is hated because he is fantasized as stealing our lost enjoyment’. Maureen Sugden, writing for the *Daily Mail* (25 July 2016), reported that Syrian refugees were unhappy with conditions on the Scottish island of Bute. Drawing on Stravrakakis (2005), this can be framed as failing to enjoy a gift, and thereby ‘stealing’ our enjoyment of our generosity. In a parliamentary debate regarding Syrian resettlement on 27th January 2016, Helen Whateley MP (2016) described Britain as having ‘a reputation as a compassionate country of opportunity ... Some have doubted us recently, but we should make that a

reality for 20,000 Syrians'. The role of selected Syrians is therefore to facilitate enjoyment of 'our' compassion. The apparent generosity of the VPRS was always explicitly limited to selected individuals, thereby assuming that 'our generosity must have its limits' (Mondon and Winter, 2020, p.51). Heidi Armbruster (2019, p.2680) argues that the project was based on 'exceptionalising a small group of Syrians as legitimate targets for compassion and constructing compassion itself as a rationed resource'. Rather than contesting wider immigration policy, framing 'us' as particularly compassionate and generous suggests there is something to defend, thereby affirming, rather than contesting, the wider logics of defence.

The articulation of logics of defence and generosity

The VPRS (2014) was introduced and implemented alongside the Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016. These Acts implement the then Home Secretary Theresa May's calls for the creation of a 'hostile environment' (Kirkup, 2012). Access to services and support was further reduced, particularly for those whose asylum claims have been refused (Liberty, 2018), and enforcement responsibilities were extended from immigration officials to the wider population (Steele et al., 2014). Targeted acts of generosity appear distinct from such systematic hostility. However, Nielsen (2016, p.156) explains how in Swedish responses to migration, the 'existence of two sets of legislation that rest on different logics was not conceived to be a problem'. This unproblematic representation results from the articulation of logics of generosity with those of defence. In her conference speech a month after the death of Alan Kurdi, May (2015) asserted that the aim of immigration policy was to 'put Britain first'. In her words, the immigration system

> is geared towards helping those most able to access it, and sometimes manipulate it, for their own ends – those who are young enough, fit enough, and have the resources to get to Britain. But that means support is too often denied to the most vulnerable.

She stresses that support for people selected under the VPRS is combined with 'work to control immigration'. The political logics of defence and generosity responded to dual political pressures (Hampshire, 2013; Hardman, 2015) to offer a humanitarian response towards selected people, without reneging on the pledges of successive governments to reduce numbers of migrants. The VPRS was not therefore a moment of politics, but a means of maintaining the social logics of the primacy of the nation-state, on which immigration policy is based.

The discursive complementarity between defence and generosity appears to be bolstered by an economic agenda. Betts (2017, p.74) argues there is remarkably little scrutiny of what he refers to as the 'resettlement industry' because it is 'worth billions of dollars a year to the NGOs and civil society organisations that participate in it'. The organisations which might be expected to lead scrutiny of government action are core to its functioning. An increased role for the voluntary sector in the application of the VPRS enables members of the public to seek enjoyment through exercising

compassion towards selected beneficiaries, without contesting the wider government agenda. Apparent consensus is thereby maintained.

Distinctions between those from whom defence is needed and those deemed worthy of generosity based on apparent 'vulnerability' are not unique to the British immigration system. Such framing is likened to what Schrover and Schinkel (2013, p.1126) describe as a binary portrayal of immigrants as 'being a risk … and being at risk'. The apparent need to balance humanitarian response and migration control reflects the inherent contradictions of liberal democracy. If there is a territorial or social border at which responsibility or obligation to provide support stops, then there is a need to police that border. During a federal election campaign speech, then Australian Prime Minister John Howard (2001) spoke of his country's 'fundamental right to control its border … We are a generous and open-hearted people … We will decide who comes and in what circumstances they come'. More than a decade later, UK Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg (2014) echoed this complementary discourse of generosity and defence, describing the UK as one of the most 'open-hearted countries in the world', evidenced by a scheme based on selecting who would enter the UK. The nebulous yet normative concept of being 'open-hearted' further asserts notions of 'us' as better than 'them', which, as Anderson (2013) argues, has been a thread of migration policy through history. In this context, the VPRS reinforces distinctions between 'us' (the providers and selectors of suitable beneficiaries), and 'them' (the beholden recipients). Hegemonic debate of immigration policy thereby becomes limited to the apparent need to balance complementary political logics of defence and generosity. The VPRS was introduced by the UK coalition government, whereas the 1998 White Paper had been introduced by New Labour. No major political party contested the hegemonic shift from the rights-based logics of the post-war era to the political logics of defence and generosity of the 1998 White Paper and the VPRS. This highlights the political consensus framing immigration policy.

Discursive framing of entitlement associated with labels of vulnerability was extended from the VPRS to other initiatives, including an independent report by Stephen Shaw (2016), former Prisons and Probation Ombudsman for England and Wales, into the 'Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons' (2016), and the inspection by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) into the 'Home Office's approach to the identification and safeguarding of vulnerable adults' (Bolt, 2019). These initiatives frame the solution to the disadvantages associated with the apparent 'vulnerability' of disabled asylum seekers, as being to identify individuals who are exceptionally worthy of support. These discursive solutions are discussed in Chapter 7. For now, it is sufficient to note that such solutions arise from hegemonic discursive representation of the problem, relying on political logics of generosity complemented by defence, and reinforced with fantasmatic logics of pride and threat. This discursive balance effectively replaces post-war political logics of rights. However, hegemonic social logics of the primacy of the nation-state remained constant.

The dominant discursive logics adopted in these policy developments are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Dominant discursive representations shaping entitlements associated with disability in UK government immigration policy

Common-sense or rarely contested social logics	Immigration framed as inherently problematic in the context of the assumed prime legitimacy of the nation-state and its citizens.
Potential moment of politics	Response to the death of Alan Kurdi highlighted the human impact of borders, causing a potential moment of political contestation.
Agenda for overt debate, or political logics	Overt contestation focused on apparent struggle to balance logics of defence and generosity towards selected people, thereby dislocating logics of rights.
Discursive representation reinforced by fantasmatic logics	Migrants framed as a burden, or as beneficiaries of generosity, who threaten or facilitate the unrealisable quest for 'our' enjoyment.

The discursive struggles which have shaped contemporary UK immigration policy appear to have taken a different path from those shaping welfare reform. However, there are increasing discursive commonalities in the representations of the problems that current policy seeks to address. Both forms of policy frame entitlement to support as dependent on distinctions of human worth rather than simply human need.

4.3 The discursive struggles shaping welfare reform

Before considering the discursive framing of welfare reform, it is important to briefly return to the context in which such reforms were introduced. Rights-based logics of disability may have been achieved later than the wider post-war consensus. However, this does not detract from their significance. In contrast to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the UNCRPD (2006) was developed by the subjects themselves. It could therefore be considered a political moment in which those with no part, asserted a part (Rancière, 1999). According to Crock, Ernst and McCallum (2012, p.737) it represented an international 'paradigm shift in the understanding of persons with disabilities as rights-bearers'. However, the focus on collective responsibility to remove access barriers was incompatible with the neoliberal representation of individual responsibility. Reductions in state support, akin to those introduced for asylum seekers in the 1998 White Paper, could not be extended to disabled citizens without contestation of what had become the hegemonic rights-based logics of disability.

The discursive struggles that enabled reductions in access to services and support to be imposed on disabled citizens now require more detailed analysis. First the welfare reform speech made by then Prime Minister Tony Blair's (1999) is considered. This is

followed by White Papers associated with such reforms in 2008 and 2010. The 2008 financial crash resulted in hegemonic logics of scarcity which facilitated reductions in state support and the dislocation of rights-based logics. Finally, attention turns to government response to the contestation associated with the inquiry of the UN Committee on the Rights of Disabled People.

Political logics of individual responsibility- Prime Minister Tony Blair, The Beveridge Lecture 1999, and the New Labour agenda

Discursive contestation of the rights-based logics underpinning the welfare state and the social model of disability was spearheaded by Blair's plans for welfare reform set out in his Beveridge lecture (1999). His speech had no direct legislative impact. However, it was selected for analysis because it conceptualises the coming hegemonic shift to the individual responsibility of neoliberal reform with the inherent inequality of service provision. The policy restrictions imposed on asylum seekers the same year could not have been extended to citizens without significant discursive contestation.

Discursive interventions are inevitably relative to what has gone before. The 1998 White Paper presented the removal of entitlement from asylum seekers as modernising the 1951 Convention in the context of increased numbers of migrants. Similarly, Blair framed his proposed welfare reforms as building on, rather than replacing, Beveridge's (1942) concept of the welfare state, creating a 'modern welfare state fit for the modern world', emphasising increased demand. His contestation of rights-based logics might have more accurately drawn equivalence with neoliberalism (Harvey, 2007), building on Milton Friedman's (1962) analysis, and adopted by UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. However, in the context of the Beveridge lecture and in the early days of a Labour administration, he drew equivalence with traditional Labour heroes including Bevan and Beveridge. He drew on discourse of a 'third way' (Giddens, 1998) between 'old Labour's' rights-based approach and Conservative attempts to cut welfare costs. The modernising narrative may have hindered contestation, obscuring the radical dislocation of previously hegemonic discourse of rights.

Blair presented his proposed welfare reforms as if distinct from immigration policy. Despite the removal of asylum seekers' entitlement to the welfare state beginning the same year (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999), Blair drew neither equivalence nor difference with discourse of immigration policy. Instead, he asserted that 'any citizen of our society should be able to meet their needs'. It is unclear whether he sought to distinguish citizens from non-citizens, or whether 'citizen' is used as a euphemism for a responsible person, drawing on what Pisani (2012) refers to as the 'citizenship assumption'. Either way, non-citizens are the unmentioned 'other', that requires no direct reference.

At this stage in the developing discourse of welfare reform, there were significant differences but also growing equivalence with immigration policy. Unlike the 1998 Paper which framed migrants as a threat to be controlled, Blair did not primarily frame

welfare claimants as the problem. Instead, he portrayed welfare dependency as hindering individual's and the wider population's capacity for enjoyment. He sought to 'tackle social exclusion' through wider service provision. However, in contrast to the vision of 'to each according to his (sic) need' which had framed Bevan's (1952) conception of the NHS, Blair (1999) spoke of support as a 'hand-up, not a hand-out', characterised by mutual responsibility, with support targeted to 'those with the most need'. This brings greater commonality with the 1998 White Paper's focus on conditionality. He sought to 'root out fraud and abuse', thereby locating the problem with claimants rather than societal barriers. Also, like the 1998 White Paper, he called for the voluntary sector to play a greater role in the delivery of welfare services. Again, this marked a shift from statutory services provided by the state, to discretionary or voluntary generosity.

Blair presented political logics of responsibility as complementary to logics of rights: 'Social justice is about mutual responsibility. It insists that we all accept duties as well as rights' (1999). The discursive trope, 'no rights without responsibilities' (Owen and Harris, 2012), would become increasingly dominant in future policy. Logics of responsibility were further combined with notions of meritocracy: 'social justice is about merit. It demands that life chances should depend on talent and effort', and that 'if you work hard, you will not be in poverty' (ibid). The corollary of this is that poverty is an individual's responsibility; that those who do not work are without 'merit' and are therefore undeserving. This implicitly contests Bevan's (1952) universalist approach, as well as contesting the collective focus of the social model and the UNCRPD on addressing socially constructed barriers. The discursive equivalence between merit and hard work would form the context for withdrawing the 'right to work' from asylum seekers' in the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act (2002), thereby affirming 'them' as being without 'merit'. The divisive impact of different representations of work is returned to in Chapter 7.

The conditionality associated with meritocracy brings increasing equivalence between welfare reform and immigration policy. As in the 1998 White Paper, the problem becomes framed as distinguishing between those who are worthy of support and those who 'abuse' the system, rather than to assert rights or the apparently more radical alternative of equal entitlement to meet human needs. Despite the modernising narrative, Blair's (1999) agenda was not simple reform, but what he described as 'a quiet revolution'. In effect, he presented the discursive framework for subsequent welfare reform, which would have increasing discursive equivalence with the conditionality of immigration policy. Understanding these developments is therefore core to understanding current restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration.

It is important to consider what impeded contestation of Blair's initial proposals for welfare reform. The proposed shift from state to individual responsibility, included disabled people gaining greater control, a long-sought demand of the disabled people's

movement. This was a time of increased government consultation on disability issues, however, as Oliver and Barnes (2012) explain, disabled people's organisations lacked capacity, leaving big charities 'only too willing to step in and fill the void' (2012, p.155). In so doing, the ideas of the disabled people's movement were 'adapted and adopted' (ibid). Oliver (2018) referred to this change, as the shift from disability activism to 'disabling corporatism', with the goal becoming incorporation rather than transformation of the mainstream political agenda. The discursive shift to individual responsibility had no obvious or immediate policy impact. It was a speech rather than legislation. Furthermore, the significance was masked by wider attention to issues of disability, as will be explored.

Political logics of equivalence, promoting 'Choice and Control' - White Paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services' (2006)

The reforms proposed by Blair (1999) formed the framework of subsequent policy changes, including the personalisation of social care. The White Paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services' (2006) formed the basis of the Health and Social Care Act (2008). As alluded to in its name, responsibility for decisions regarding preferred support services shifts from the state to the individual. Expectations that all disabled people would attend the same day centres were replaced with an individual right to choose from an array of possible providers. The increased role of voluntary services (UK 2006, p.28) and the reduction in state services were presented as inconsequential side-effects of fulfilling disabled people's long-awaited demands for 'choice and control' over services. Similarly, the promotion of individual responsibility was referred to not as a threat but as the promotion of 'health and well-being' (UK 2006, p.24). Contestation was hindered by the discursive framing of equivalence between government policy and the demands of the disabled people's movement. More specifically, discourse of 'choice and control' was articulated with neoliberal focus on individual responsibility. Vic Finkelstein (2007, p.13) was among the few activists who warned that the shift from collective to individual responsibility was a 'capitalist dream come true'. In contrast, discourse of personalised services was largely welcomed by the disabled people's movement until the implications became more apparent. In her retrospective analysis, Karen West (2012) observes that the 'ideological grip' of 'choice and control' masked the reduction of state services. The distortion of the original meaning of 'choice and control' fitted with New Labour's agenda. However, as Morris (2011, p.3) observes 'in engaging with the dominant policy agendas – we have … unintentionally, contributed towards a steady undermining of collective responsibility'. This was not the only occasion when the implications of reforms were recognised too late. Iain Ferguson (2017, p.128) argues that neoliberal ideology repeatedly appropriates 'progressive sounding ideas' to use 'for less than progressive ends'. The promotion of individual responsibility and the reduction of state services can, retrospectively, be understood as the precursor to the austerity measures introduced ostensibly in response to the 2008 financial crash.

Fantasmatic logics of disabled people as a burden - 2010 White Paper 'Universal Credit: welfare that works'

Analysis now turns to the discursive developments regarding the entitlements of disabled people, set out in the White Paper 'Universal Credit: welfare that works' (2010), and subsequent Welfare Reform Act (2012). This agenda was presented as responding to the need for austerity following the financial crash of 2008 and the accompanying discourse of scarcity. The crash could be considered the 'shock' (Klein, 2007) necessary for the imposition of austerity, characterised by 'neoliberal "marketisation moves"' and 'steep spending cuts' (Glynos, Speed and West, 2014, p.6). The impact of austerity, introduced by Prime Minister Cameron as part of the coalition government, has been analysed elsewhere (see for example O'Hara, 2014), with its disproportionate impact on disabled people (Roulstone, 2015; Ryan, 2019) and mental health service users (Barr et al., 2016). This was a moment of political contestation, but in contrast to Rancière's (1999) conception, it further removed the rights of the population with no part.

The White Paper (2010) has discursive commonalities with the welfare reform agenda envisaged by Blair (1999) a decade earlier. In a similar manner to Blair, the 2010 White Paper presented the key problem as 'welfare dependency', with the solution presented as promoting 'personal responsibility' (2010, p.6). During a House of Lords debate regarding this legislation, Lord Boswell of Aynho criticises the White Paper, warning of the detrimental impact of framing someone as an 'architect of their own distress' or as 'morally unworthy' (Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, 2012 17th January, Column 468). In response, Lord Freud (2012, 17th January, Column 482) stresses that 'we are trying to direct scarce resources, at a very difficult time, to the people who need them most'. The biopsychosocial model of disability (Waddell and Aylward, 2009) is referenced by Freud, asserting the need for 'personal effort' to 'overcome' (sic) disability (Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, 2012). The transfer of responsibility from the state to the individual was no longer framed as facilitating individual 'choice and control', but as reducing the burden on government finances. This evoked similar discursive justification as had been applied to asylum seekers in 1998.

Austerity must be understood in the context of ongoing discursive struggles for hegemony. Welfare reform (2010) and the wider austerity agenda were premised on individual responsibility and the conditionality of entitlement, further dislocating the post-war discursive logics of rights and universal entitlement on which the NHS had been founded (Bevan, 1952). The reduction in state services, ostensibly in response to the 2008 financial crash, formed part of a gradual but far-reaching hegemonic shift. As Oliver and Barnes argue:

> the immediate post-war consensus on the need to ensure access to legal, civil, and social rights for all … has gradually given way to the monetarist doctrines of the

> neoconservatives or New Right … [S]tate-sponsored welfare systems are said to have discouraged individualism, self-reliance, voluntary action and private initiatives. (2012, p.122)

This discursive development was facilitated by the failure of the Beveridge report (1942) to embed disabled people's rights in the welfare state. As in the 1998 White Paper, entitlement to support became framed as not simply dependent on need, but as conditional on individual attributes, including evidence of apparent responsibility. The removal of services and support was framed as a response to the need to reduce the burden on public finances, with consequent loss of life (Ryan, 2019) an unmentioned side effect. The disjuncture between human need and entitlement to support is central to further developments.

In the context of discursive reference to crisis and the need to reduce expenditure, austerity directed public resentment at those perceived as disproportionate users of state support. Users of state services, including disabled citizens, became presented as a burden, or, in Lacanian terms, as stealing the 'enjoyment' (Stavrakakis, 2005; Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008) of the legitimate majority. Without referring to disabled people per se, Glynos et al. (2012, p.306) refer to the apparent rage evoked by 'the idea that their enjoyment comes at our expense'. The problem to be addressed by the legislation was framed as distinguishing between those people who are an unnecessary burden and those who are worthy of generosity. Referring to the impact of welfare reform, then Prime Minister Cameron (2015a) stated that 'we will stand by my promises to protect the most vulnerable – including the most disabled who cannot work, because that's the sign of the compassionate country I believe in'. This discursive representation of eligibility being dependent on compassion towards those labelled as 'vulnerable' draws on similar distinctions as immigration policy (UK Great Britain. The Home Office, 1998; Great Britain. The Home Office and The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, 2014). Those disabled people framed as ineligible became labelled as 'scroungers', or a burden on the state (Garthwaite, 2011; Patrick, 2016). Negative constructions of dependency were evoked to legitimise the end of a 'something for nothing culture' (Patrick, 2012, p.309). Social model assertions of collective responsibility to address disabling barriers had been dislocated, with focus placed instead on individual responsibility.

Poststructuralist discourse theory assumes that discursive struggles are necessarily unfinished and contingent. As Glynos et al (2012, p.299) explain, 'structures are inherently incomplete', resulting in continual potential for 'contestation and mobilization'. The restrictions imposed on asylum seekers in 1999 were incompatible with what was then largely hegemonic recognition of the collective responsibility evoked by the social model to remove disabling access barriers for citizens. Gradual discursive challenge took place after Blair's speech in 1999, including the 2006 personalisation agenda of 'choice and control' (UK 2006, p.6), and the development of the biopsychosocial model (Waddell and Aylward, 2009), before the deliberate restrictions

imposed on asylum seekers could be extended to citizens. The discursive struggle is always and inevitably incomplete. However, despite the more gradual shift and the less absolute removal of entitlement to the welfare state, there has been greater resistance to the removal of support from disabled citizens than there was to the removal of rights from asylum seekers.

Attention now turns to complaints by disabled people's organisations, which resulted in an inquiry by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016). The logics of individual responsibility underpinning welfare reform were contested with attempted reassertion of logics of rights.

Attempted reassertion of logics of rights – Inquiry by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016) and the UK government response

The UK government's Welfare Reform should have been in line with state obligations under the UNCRPD. According to Theresia Degener (2017, p.3), 'state parties do not understand the profound change in disability policy and law that is embedded in the CRPD'. However, assessing UK compliance with the UNCRPD, the UN Committee (2016, paragraph 83) described welfare reforms as resulting, not from misunderstanding, but from deliberate prioritisation of reducing state expenditure. The committee described the disproportionate impact of austerity policies on disabled people, resulting in 'grave and systematic' abuse of disabled people's rights, arguing that the potentially beneficial impact of personalisation (UNCRPD, 2006) was unrealisable in this context. Government officials were criticised for making unsubstantiated accusations that disabled people were 'committing fraud … being lazy and putting a burden on taxpayers' (2016, paragraph 85), thereby encouraging negative media discourse and public hostility. The government was advised that disabled people 'should not be perceived as mere recipients of support, but as rights-holders' (2016, p.4, paragraph 12). This reassertion of disability rights contested Blair's (1999) agenda of welfare reform and its subsequent enactment.

The UK government responded by framing the task as the need to balance their obligations with the individual responsibility of disabled people. It stated ongoing commitment to:

> disability equality which focuses on inclusion and mainstreaming, with additional support provided as necessary, and on involving disabled people in making the decisions that affect their lives. (Great Britain. UK Government, 2017, p.3)

This mirrors the discursive representation of the problem addressed by the White Papers (2006; 2010). Drawing on the biopsychosocial model, the government response includes 57 references to the value of work, asserting 'benefits to an individual's mental and physical health and well-being' (2017, p.3) while asserting that citizens 'who cannot work because of a disability or health condition' receive the support they need (2017, p.3). This assertion is complemented by nine references to

disabled people as 'vulnerable', thereby locating the problem with the individual rather than with collective failure to address systemic barriers. The conditionality of entitlement inherent in the government's response, mirrors distinctions in welfare reform and immigration policy. Furthermore, in a similar manner to discourse associated with the VPRS (2014), the government asserts being 'proud of its record' (2017, p.3). Disabled people are thereby framed as beneficiaries of generosity, rather than holders of rights. Such lack of congruence with government obligations under the UNCRPD may stem from lack of understanding (Degener, 2017) or lack of concern. Either way, the government response to the UN inquiry simply reasserts the logics of the legislation.

Government failure to facilitate disabled people's access to the rights enshrined in the UNCRPD may, however, not be the core problem. Writing before this UN inquiry, Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.151) assert that it is unsurprising that the rights-based consensus 'has not brought about equality for disabled people or other oppressed groups'. If the problems faced by disabled people or migrants stem from neoliberal reduction of state services and capitalist prioritisation of economic productivity, then the legal right to support within these structures would be insufficient adjustment. In a capitalist economy, driven by the balance of profit and loss, some investment is needed to promote a productive workforce. However, as Clifford (2020, p.48) argues, expenditure on people perceived as unproductive becomes simply a loss to be reduced. As such, logics of rights could contest logics of generosity and the framing of support for asylum seekers as a gift, however, systemic contestation based on social logics of equality and solidarity are needed to contest assumed distinctions of human worth.

The dominant discursive struggles shaping welfare are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Dominant discursive representations shaping entitlements in UK government welfare reform policy

Common-sense, or rarely contested, social logics	Non-disabled citizens framed as the norm to be prioritised, with the 'other' categorised according to perceived individual merit. In the context of a capitalist economy, people with impairments limiting productivity assumed to be a burden on profit.
Potential moment of politics	The moment of instability or 'shock' (Klein, 2007) of the financial crash (2008) facilitated neoliberal cuts to state services, shifting assumed collective responsibility to the individual, with disabled people disproportionately affected (UN, 2016).
Agenda for overt debate, or political logics	Welfare reform framed as balancing the rights-based logics of the post-war era and the welfare state, with modern neoliberal logics of individual responsibility.

Discursive representation reinforced by fantasmatic logics	Disabled people are framed as providing inspiration, or as a burden on the wider population. Both positions are relative to the needs of a dominant population.

The discursive struggles shaping immigration policy and welfare reform shape the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees. I now turn to analyse discursive representation of intersectional needs.

4.4 Intersectional political discourse

If the problem to be addressed by government legislation is framed as the 'threat' of immigration or the 'burden' of the welfare state, then control or responsibility, rather than rights-based solutions, appear appropriate. The primacy of assumed 'normality', on which immigration policy and welfare reform is based, marginalises people framed as 'other'. It might have been anticipated that the discursive struggles of disability policy would facilitate contestation of the disabling impact of denial of services at the core of immigration policy. However, neither the discursive struggles of immigration policy, nor those of welfare reform, expose the intersectional barriers faced by disabled people in the asylum and immigration system. Contestation is hindered by the dislocation of rights-based discourse and its replacement with increasingly hegemonic framing of disabled people as a burden, within wider neoliberal discourse of individual responsibility. Meanwhile, immigration policy, and particularly the VPRS (Great Britain. The Home Office and The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, 2014), adopts a charity model approach, framing individuals as beneficiaries of generosity, while disregarding collective responsibilities to address socially constructed barriers. The language of vulnerability affirms this approach, locating the problem with the individual, undermining the collective focus of the UNCRPD, and facilitating neoliberal focus on individual responsibility (Morris, 2015; Yeo, R., 2019; Clifford, 2020). The solution to the restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled asylum seekers or refugees thereby becomes framed as an individual quest for recognition of vulnerability and therefore entitlement. Both policy areas frame the problem as the identification of people worthy of support, rather than the meeting of human needs. Disabled migrants become framed as insignificant minorities, or as vulnerable recipients of generosity, but not as people entitled to meet their human needs.

There are multiple examples of the convergence of the two areas of policy. Disabled asylum seekers lost entitlement to Disability Living Allowance through the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999); citizens began to lose this entitlement through the Welfare Reform Act (2012). Similarly, asylum seekers became subject to forced dispersal to areas of low-cost housing more than a decade before the Welfare Reform Act (2012) introduced the under-occupancy penalty, commonly known as the 'bedroom tax' (Clifford, 2020, p.12). The dominant discursive justification for the dispersal of asylum seekers was control over 'them', whereas the bedroom tax evokes logics of individual responsibility. However, the impact is similar: benefit-claimants are forced to move to

areas of low-cost housing, irrespective of where family, friends and support networks might be based. In addition, the halting of support to asylum seekers whose asylum claims are refused is not unlike the use of sanctions on benefit-claimants (Ryan, 2019; Clifford, 2020). The potential for support to be stopped creates an extrajudicial form of punishment, increasing precarity and reducing transparency of decision making, thereby creating a more compliant population. The transfer of responsibility to the voluntary sector results in increasing dependence on discretionary acts of generosity from friends, family, and charitable agencies.

In a move suggesting more deliberate denial of intersectional rights, when the UK ratified the UNCRPD it included a reservation exempting immigration policy from its obligations. As barrister Stephanie Motz explains in a lecture, 'the right to liberty of movement contained in the CRPD does not apply to disabled persons without a right to enter and remain in the UK' (2016). However, she questions the reservation's legal compatibility with the object and purpose of UNCRPD. The CRPD committee criticised EU member states' response to the needs of disabled migrants. It recommended the mainstreaming of disability in immigration policies (2 October 2015, cited by Motz, 2016), thereby confirming the view that government obligations under the Convention extend to migrant populations within their country. However, the UN inquiry included only indirect reference to the intersectional needs of disabled migrants or non-citizens. The UK government report states that it 'wants all *citizens* … to have more control' (paragraph 24). The implication is that non-citizens are the '*other',* whose existence requires no acknowledgement. Reiterating Ball's (2006, p.14) assertion of the importance of what 'they do not think about', this omission is itself noteworthy. Failure to consider intersectional restrictions suggests hegemonic acceptance of social logics of citizen priority, with the lower entitlements of asylum seekers ignored or framed as a separate issue.

Despite increasing commonalities in the impact of immigration policy and welfare reform, distinctions in the discursive rationales are maintained. As explained, the notion of 'control' has normative but inconsistent, or what Butler, Laclau and Žižek (2000, p.305) refer to as 'floating', meaning within UK government discourse of immigration (Great Britain. The Home Office, 1998) and welfare reform (Great Britain. Department of Health and Social Care, 2006) policies. In the 1998 White Paper, the words 'control' or 'controlling' are used 186 times in the 55-page document, emphasising the state's need to assert control *over migrants* to avert the apparent threat. This control is coercive or disciplinary. The same words are used 141 times in the 2006 White Paper *providing* service users with 'more choice and control' over their care services. This control is framed as empowering. The two forms of control are not interchangeable. The notion that asylum seekers might be given 'choice and control' over services remains counter-hegemonic. Furthermore, the contingency of discursive practice is highlighted by the potentially progressive goal of individual control being co-opted to mask the reduction of state services. This facilitated the introduction of restrictions in the 2010 Welfare Reform White Paper, including coercive forms of control

akin to the 1998 White Paper. These Papers indicate increasing commonalities between the discourse of coercive control within both welfare reform and immigration policy. The contemporary neoliberal discursive hegemony frames disabled people and migrants as burdens to be controlled.

Conclusion

The discursive policy struggles outlined in this chapter are those of the dominant political class. These struggles shape the intersectional entitlements associated with disability and immigration. In both policy areas, the need for distinctions of entitlement is assumed, with access to support conditional not on need, but on individual attributes of apparent worth. Overt contestation, within the policy discourse, is focused on adjusting the borders of entitlement, determining who is worthy of generosity, who is framed as a burden, and whose life remains unacknowledged. Public discourse becomes limited to balancing political logics of defence, generosity, rights, and responsibility. Such discourse is assisted by fantasmatic logics of threat, goodness, and pride. The resulting appearance of political debate assumes the legitimacy of social logics, in which the entitlements of disabled people and migrants are secondary to those of non-disabled citizens. Disabled asylum seekers are thereby automatically framed as the 'other', potentially worthy of generosity but not of equality.

The convergence of dominant discourses of immigration and welfare reform policies does not suggest an end point. Social orders are always, and inevitably, contingent. However, political contestation is defined and limited by awareness of possibility. When the hegemonic discursive agenda is restricted to contesting the borders of entitlement and determining the appropriate balance between existing political logics, then core inequalities appear inevitable. This serves to preclude, or to diminish, the validity of alternatives such as logics of equal rights and the inherent worth in a person's existence.

This chapter has focused on the discursive struggles determining government policies regarding entitlements associated with disability, forced migration and intersectionality. These struggles determine the formal entitlements of disabled asylum seekers and refugees. If the entitlements are to be effectively challenged, then their discursive representation must also be contested. The contingency of these policies motivates the investigation. Subsequent chapters explore how hegemonic discursive representations, and the associated concealment of possibility, are contested, reflected, or reinforced by people with different subject positions. Chapter 5 explores how problems associated with disability and forced migration are explained by those responsible for implementing policy. Chapter 6 turns to the explanations of those on whom policy impacts most directly: disabled asylum seekers and refugees themselves. The final chapter investigates how these perceptions frame understanding of potential solutions and shape attempts to contest the hegemony.

Chapter 5. Discursive representation of disability and forced migration adopted by people shaping the implementation of policy and practice.

> to what extent do subjects engage authentically with the radical contingency of social relations… or to what extent are they complicit in concealing it?
>
> (Glynos and Howarth, 2007, p.111)

The previous chapter analysed discursive representations of the problems associated with disability and forced migration adopted in UK government policy documents. Drawing on the poststructuralist logics of critical explanation introduced in Chapter 2, analysis focused on key immigration and welfare reform policies determining current entitlements of disabled asylum seekers and refugees. These policies appear underpinned by rarely contested social logics assuming the primacy of non-disabled, economically productive citizens of the nation-state. Overt debate then becomes limited to determining the borders of entitlement by balancing political logics of generosity, defence, responsibility, and rights. These political logics are reinforced with fantasmatic logics of pride in 'our' generosity and the need to defend against the perceived threat of the 'other'. Any social order foregrounds the visibility, or aesthetics (Rancière, 2011), of some perspectives rather than others. The jurisdiction of a national government extends to its borders, it may therefore be expected that its discursive representations assume the prime legitimacy of citizens of the nation-state. Furthermore, in the context of a capitalist economy, it is also to be expected that profit maximisation is prioritised, and that effort is made to reduce perceived burdens on economic productivity.

Attention now turns to analyse how elite policy discourse is reflected, reinforced, or contested by people with different subject positions regarding implementation of policy and practice in the asylum sector and disabled people's movement. This includes politicians, civil servants, social care staff, legal representatives, voluntary sector employees and activists. Some interviewees have formal responsibilities for implementation of government policies; others contribute to shaping informal services, including potential peer support. Analysis again explores the logics adopted in discursive struggles for hegemony. If policy discourse is replicated by people with different roles and responsibilities, then it becomes hegemonic. The radical contingency of any social order may thereby become obscured, hindering effective contestation of existing injustices and the development of alternatives.

This chapter is followed by analysis of the perspectives of disabled asylum seekers and refugees with lived experience of the impact of current policies. The analytical distinction between the perspectives of people who implement policy and practice, and those with lived experience of the impact, is not to suggest an absolute divide. Everybody has multiple identities, roles, and responsibilities. The hegemonic

assumptions shaping the social order impact on everybody, albeit with different consequences according to a person's subject position and relative power. As Gramsci argues (see for example Crehan, 2016), hegemonic discourse is implemented or contested through everyday cultural interactions and is, therefore, not limited to people with formal positions of responsibility. However, making a distinction between perspectives associated with different subject positions enables more explicit analysis of the expertise developed through lived experience, for whom current policy and practice has the most direct, potentially life or death, impact.

As explained in Chapter 3, analysis focuses on the nature and impact of different perspectives, rather than on any quantitative assessment of injustice. Purposive sampling was used to elicit contributions from people with diverse subject positions. As such, no interviewee is assumed to represent a larger body and no judgement is made regarding how pervasive any perspective may be. Interviewees were encouraged to speak about their perceptions of disability and forced migration, rather than to provide comparable answers to predetermined questions. This chapter brings together these perspectives, beginning by considering what interviewees understand by disability. This contributes to more detailed discursive explanation of the discursive logics adopted by interviewees to explain the nature of problems associated with disability and forced migration, investigating what the problem is represented to be, where it is located, and how this relates to elite policy discourse. Finally, this chapter explores the drivers of current discursive explanations, considering the consequences for disabled asylum seekers, refugees, and the wider population.

The previous chapter showed that government policies regarding both disability and migration are designed to create distinctions between people framed as worthy of support and those who are not. It is unsurprising that there are numerous examples of the injustices experienced by people framed as unworthy. Some of these injustices will be discussed in the next chapter, but as explained, this study is not designed to catalogue or to prove the existence of the resultant injustices. Instead, the focus is on understanding how such injustice is determined, becomes hegemonic and how it could be effectively contested.

With this goal, this chapter turns to the perceptions of people who implement policy and practice, before exploring the expertise resulting from lived experience of the impact in Chapter 6. There is a clear need for greater understanding of disability among asylum sector staff. The multifaceted struggles and resulting distress which people experience cannot be underestimated. Das5 has a safe place to live and some basic financial support. However, he spoke of relentless struggles to find support for himself and his adult disabled daughter. She cannot currently be left alone and cannot leave their one-bedroom flat. Without apparent means of resolving these barriers, he spoke to me of feeling like a candle that is burning to give other people light. The problem, he explained, is that they do not realise his heart is being destroyed until there will be nothing left.

In the context of the scale of current struggles for survival, I do not seek to criticise work to improve access to immediate needs. Instead, I analyse whether current understanding of the problem, and the resultant actions, serve to contest causal inequalities.

5.1 Understanding of disability

Discursive representations of disability shape perceptions of the problem in the current social order. Such representations reflect understanding of who has the expertise, where allegiances are made, and who is responsible for any injustices. Like all discursive explanations, the framing of disability is always relational and cannot be neutral. Whether intentional or not, the discourse of people with different subject positions draws on logics of equivalence or difference with dominant policy discourse, thereby reinforcing or contesting the existing social order.

Lack of routine interaction between the immigration sector and the disabled people's movement results in little attention being given to intersectional experiences. The removal of entitlement to financial support associated with disability, from asylum seekers through the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, was a fundamental moment in the dislocation of logics of rights, as discussed in Chapter 4. Yet this remained unreferenced in key academic literature in disability studies (Barnes and Mercer, 2003; Oliver, 2009; Roulstone, Sheldon and Harris, 2017; Shakespeare, 2017). There has been similar lack of intersectional focus in the immigration sector. According to Home Office and NGO members of the Equalities sub-group of the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum (NASF), disability had not featured on their agenda until 2013, when I and a voluntary sector employee presented these issues. For people without access to intersectional interaction or to counter-hegemonic discourse, it becomes unsurprising if elite discourse sets the parameters for wider debate. In the context of the neoliberal hegemony, with assumed distinctions of individual worth and the reduction of state services (Harvey, 2007), it becomes counter-hegemonic to assert logics of equal rights or social model principles of collective responsibility to address the disabling impact of inadequate, or inaccessible, services.

Discursive representation of a problem may reinforce the hegemony, or facilitate contestation in progressive, or regressive, ways. As outlined in Chapter 4, the use of labels of individual vulnerability (VPRS, 2014; Shaw, 2016; Bolt, 2019) to indicate eligibility for support, undermines social model principles of collective responsibility. In an informal discussion with a disabled citizen who had had a leading role in developing the UNCRPD, he asked why the asylum sector invents new terms when the word 'disabled' already exists. Reliance on different terminology frames disabled asylum seekers as if distinct from citizens, while also undermining the achievements of the disabled people's movement. As discussed in Chapter 1, social model (Oliver, 1983) rhetoric temporarily gained hegemony relative to individualistic medical or charity models of disability (Fleischer and Zames, 2001; Oliver et al., 2012; Clifford, 2020).

The shift to the biopsychosocial model (Waddell and Aylward, 2009) and the assertion of individual responsibility, facilitated the withdrawal of services and support on which Welfare Reforms are based. It is perhaps inevitable that the discursive representation of policy impacts on the understanding of those who implement policy and practice.

Confusion regarding terminology extends beyond the immigration sector. The term 'people with disabilities' is accepted language in many countries, including in the UNCRPD. However, in the UK, the social model is based on the premise that societal structures disable people, therefore people *are* disabled, rather than *having* disabilities. A disabled citizen (udc1) referred to 'disabled people' and 'people with disabilities' interchangeably. When questioned about his rationale for oscillating between different terminology, udc1 responded that one never knows who is listening. Having grown up under New Labour, this person explained: 'we were always taught: Hold the centre. Hold the centre'. He went on to explain that he sought to avoid being perceived as having 'a chip on my shoulder', wishing not to come across 'as against capitalism'. His assumption was that avoiding contestation is akin to neutrality, and that this is both possible and desirable. Debates as to preferred terminology and associated allegiances may seem trivial in the context of life-threatening denial of support. However, as stressed in Chapter 4, discursive representations of the problem, shape policies, actions, and perceived solutions.

Taking a poststructural position, discursive framing is understood as both describing and shaping policy and practice. If state support is removed, then collective responsibility is also removed. Survival then depends on individual initiatives. People who can cope are framed as if not 'vulnerable' enough to be entitled to additional support. As a legal professional (lp1) explained:

> I suspect that … the resourcefulness of people to cope, they find ways to cope. It doesn't help them … because quite often the attitude is, "well you have survived so far, so you are coping". And you have to show that they are not coping. And so, you have to reach this sort of crisis point, which services aren't supposed to let you reach, in order to show that they need to intervene.

Labels of vulnerability are combined with labels of resilience, a highly valued attribute of neoliberal discourse, indicating individual responsibility. Escaping from difficult situations, travelling to the UK, and surviving in the asylum system, relies on high levels of resilience. However, if a person is perceived as 'able to cope', then they also become undeserving of generosity. Both resilience and vulnerability locate the problem and the solution at the individual level, rather than with socially constructed physical or attitudinal barriers (see for example Yeo and Moore, 2003, p.572). If the problem is represented as being at the individual level, then the solution becomes distinguishing between who is worthy, and who is not, rather than addressing systemic causes.

Segregation from the history and achievements of the disabled people's movement enables the immigration sector to function in discursive isolation. Responsibility for this division cannot be attributed entirely to either sector. An employee of a disabled people's organisation (vsd1) explained that the lack of asylum seekers among their membership is because the organisation's constitution insists members identify as disabled people and support the social model of disability. According to her, 'prejudice within their communities' makes it harder for asylum seekers or members of minority ethnic groups to identify as a disabled person. The overwhelmingly white membership was thereby attributed to problems in 'their communities' rather than organisational barriers. It is ironic if expectations of adherence to the social model's focus on systemic disablement, hinder contestation of the disabling barriers of the asylum system.

Some immigration sector interviewees referred to stigma associated with disability as if it were an issue exclusive to countries from which refugees flee. An asylum sector employee (vsi5) with awareness of social model principles stated that:

> in the UK, people would quite proudly say … society has done that to me in a social model way. But, in other places, people don't have all of that … theory around it, or a history of a disability movement ... so people are kind of a little bit like, well …I also have a problem with this thing…

The perception that asylum seekers have different understanding of disability appears pervasive. In a group discussion (vsi1), a voluntary sector employee stated that 'they [refugees] don't see disability the same way we [British citizens] see disability, there is a lot of stigma to do with it'. This view was repeated by a local authority employee (laer3), who stated that resettled refugees feel stigma regarding disability, because they come 'from a country that doesn't recognise disability in a positive way'. This person's colleague (laer1) stated in a separate interview that there is:

> not much of disability awareness where people come from and a lot of people see it as a weakness in the family or shame to the family having a disabled person in the family or being disabled yourself … here … that shame is gone because over here people are treated as they are.

A disabled refugee (das10) contradicted this perception just moments later and in the presence of laer1, describing equally positive support in his country of origin as in the UK. This lived experience did not appear to shift the perceptions of the local authority employee. He continued to locate the problem with disabled refugees:

> some people … they start to define themselves by their disability and they don't do much about getting on in their lives … if you're in a wheelchair you can still find a job … some people … they don't really make any effort.

This perspective implicitly asserts the biopsychosocial model (Waddell and Aylward, 2009), reinforcing the hegemonic discourse of individual responsibility which shapes

welfare reform. This person went on to criticise a disabled refugee for unwillingness to use a wheelchair. In this study, only statutory service providers overtly blamed disabled people for the difficulties. Perhaps implementation of restricted entitlement to services and support results in a dispassionate approach towards people denied access.

The assumption that disability is associated with greater stigma in people's countries of origin is not borne out by this study. One asylum seeker (das2) very openly uses an electric wheelchair as a practical tool to help her get around but gets out of it when she can. I overheard a UK citizen watching her dance at a social event and questioning whether she is really disabled if she can get out of her chair. This questioning suggests several problematic assumptions. It reinforces the notion that an asylum seeker may be seeking more than they are entitled to and that a non-disabled citizen can make this judgement. Furthermore, the notion that 'real' disabled people cannot get out of a chair is built on the assumption that the use of mobility aids is a last resort rather than a useful tool. This reinforces stigma (of which das2 appears unaware) associated with the use of such aids in the UK. More fundamentally, the questioning reinforces assumed distinctions between worthy and unworthy asylum seekers.

The stigma commonly associated with mental distress in the UK requires further consideration. A disabled citizen working with asylum seekers (udc2), explained that in her observations, among asylum seekers:

> the largest group I would say, probably have experienced mental health issues. And that's a big taboo in this country amongst the white population.

As a mental health service user herself, she was under no doubts as to the disabling and stigmatising barriers experienced in this country. The stigma associated with mental distress in the UK is contrasted with the perceptions of disabled asylum seekers in the next chapter.

Different understanding of problems associated with disability shape assumed priorities for action. One person (vsi5) who has worked in voluntary organisations in the asylum sector for many years, explains that in the asylum sector, high levels of mental distress are:

> normalised… we're like, people just don't sleep … people just are depressed … people just do have flashbacks … in someone else who wasn't an asylum seeker, maybe we would think oh, how awful, we should do something about it…[in the asylum sector] there's some kind of inertia … because it's nearly across the board.

Despite assertions that disability is rare in the asylum system, several interviewees reiterated the notion that mental distress is 'across the board' (vsi5). A legal professional (lp2) explained: 'everyone has some mental health problem if they're an asylum seeker, because life is so grim'. Specific research has been carried out regarding mental distress in the asylum sector (see for example Patel and Mahtani, 2007), as discussed in Chapter 1. However, if in the asylum sector, disability is

assumed not to include people with those forms of impairment that are 'nearly across the board', then it is unsurprising if it also appears as if not many disabled asylum seekers exist. This then feeds into dominant narratives that the needs of disabled asylum seekers are insignificant minority issues. If there were more interaction with the disabled people's movement it would be known that mental distress is a form of impairment which is included even in legal definitions of disability, as listed in Chapter 1.

Different ways of understanding disability undoubtedly hinder communication and unified action. The impact of different theoretical understanding of disability is compounded by reliance on interpreters, where different ways of translating terminology may result in different understanding of the problem and potential solutions. The assumed location of responsibility to address the problems faced by disabled people shapes where alliances are made and what the solutions are perceived to be. Immigration sector interviewees, from both statutory and voluntary sectors, failed to draw equivalence between discursive battles regarding migration and those of the disabled people's movement. Instead, disability in the immigration sector becomes framed as a distinct, minority issue, located at the level of the individual, rather than an issue of collective responsibility caused by disabling barriers. This discursive representation of problems associated with disability reinforces hegemonic dislocation of rights, and limits perceived solutions to endeavours to reduce individual impact, as will be analysed in Chapter 7.

5.2 Discursive representations adopted by people implementing policy and practice

Perceptions of disability feed into wider explanations of the restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled asylum seekers. Among the diverse contributors to this study, some people frame themselves as neutral administrators; others are explicitly opposed to the hostility of the current system. However, no contributor overtly condoned the restrictions faced by disabled asylum seekers. This analysis explores what maintains current injustices in the context of such lack of endorsement.

The perspectives of contributors to this study are summarised in three interconnected categories, as outlined in Table 8.

Table 8: Discursive representations of the problems associated with disability and forced migration, asserted by people with different subject positions

Common-sense or rarely contested social logics	Hegemonic representations are reinforced, implicitly affirming the primacy of non-disabled UK citizens.

Agenda for overt debate, or political logics	Fatalistic approach to systemic inequalities, reduces overt debate to political logics of pragmatism, creating categories of exceptional entitlement, with a sufficientarian approach to support, rather than contesting the existence of distinctions of human worth. Contestation based on logics of solidarity and equality is apparent among activists.
Wider representation, reinforced by fantasmatic logics	Social and political logics are reinforced by fantasmatic logics of pride in the support provided, or in the appearance of contestation among people adjusting the borders of entitlement, despite lack of challenge to hegemonic distinctions of human worth.

Despite the broad consensus as to the injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers, the perceived intractability is affirmed by the reinforcement of these hegemonic discursive logics. This is not to suggest a total absence of wider contestation. Activist contributors such as udc5, das9 and participants in dmas3 assert commitment to the promotion of solidarity and equality of entitlement.

These broad logics of explanation are examined before considering the consequences and repercussions of these discursive representations.

Social logics asserting the primacy of non-disabled citizens with sufficientarian response to the 'other'

Broad consensus among interviewees that disabled asylum seekers face injustice is combined with discourse of fatalism. The suffering experienced by disabled asylum seekers is thereby framed as unfortunate, but inevitable. Uncontested social logics assume the greater entitlement of non-disabled citizens to be incontestable. Equal rights are therefore assumed to be unattainable or inappropriate. This is similar to Gramsci's analysis that hegemonic framing of the social order is as 'a fixed and unchangeable reality that it would be futile to oppose' (Crehan, 2016, pp.51-52). The 'other' may be unreferenced, framed as having 'disposable' (Giroux, 2008) or 'wasted lives' (Bauman, 2004), or perceived as further evidence of the brutality of the existing system. But if the system is perceived as intractable then any support becomes framed as sufficient.

Pervasive discourse of fatalism among interviewees with different subject positions is not to suggest their lack of commitment towards people experiencing injustice. At a planning meeting for an event (dmas2) focused on the social care needs of asylum seekers, an asylum sector employee expressed surprise at the outrage shown by disabled citizens (udc3 and udc5) regarding the experiences of asylum seekers. She explained that:

> everything we do with the Home Office is inhumane, we just get used to it. We constantly have to accept systematic abuse. I can't campaign because all my time is spent trying to get people's needs met in the system.

All her time is spent working for people's immediate survival needs. Likewise, a disabled asylum seeker (das13) who had been made street homeless shrugged with resignation as he described his constant struggle to find food, somewhere to sleep and to be safe. For him, these experiences simply add to the litany of injustices he has experienced. Both he and the asylum sector employee had adopted fatalistic perceptions, whereas udc5, a disabled citizen, objected to the apparent acceptance of lower standards for asylum seekers. As such, udc5 contests hegemonic social logics, instead assuming equality. Increasing commonalities between the restrictions imposed on asylum seekers and welfare reform policies could highlight the need for intersectional resistance or could reinforce the sense of impotence.

Perceptions of the system as unjust but intractable are not confined to the voluntary sector. People involved in implementation of what could be described as political logics of defence at the Home Office (cs1,2), or logics of generosity within the VPRS (uis6, dcm3), stressed the limitations of their power within the context of wider immigration objectives. With faltering language, as if aware that the perceived choices are unappealing, a Home Office employee (cs1) described the inevitable consequences of 'immigration control':

> there will be people who get decisions … that aren't the decisions that they want … we obviously have got … safeguarding and vulnerability responsibilities as people go through the system, but … if you haven't been granted, how do we ensure that there is, you know, I guess, that the options around supported return…

This person locates the problem with asylum decisions, yet he frames these as if intractable. A colleague (cs3) of this person expressed similar fatalistic assumptions, focusing on perceived Home Office impotence to address the problems. Beyond asylum decision-making, he described the 'few powers we have when it comes to vulnerabilities. The power's really to recognise and refer'. The fatalism expressed by cs2 is associated with this reliance on wider services:

> we're so dependent on whatever systems deal with those vulnerabilities, whether it's mental health, or physical disabilities … If those systems are stressed … it makes liaising with those providers and trying to get a service for a particular person … that much harder.

He continued that, 'in a way, we're no different than another member of the public who's trying to get service for their own family member'. To liken a core government agency to a 'member of the public' suggests denial of the existence and consequences of power inequalities. Furthermore, it is disingenuous for the Home Office to focus on wider services' responsibility, when the Home Office is responsible for providing accommodation and support for asylum seekers, irrespective of whether this

responsibility is outsourced to external contractors. Only if a person is found eligible for Community Care (Great Britain. The Home Office, 2018a) does responsibility shift to the local authority. Nonetheless, the impact of service cuts was reiterated by people with wider subject positions. In a group of voluntary sector staff and activists (laer2) working with refugees with entitlement to access the welfare state, one person described the impact of cuts resulting in people arriving in the UK 'coming onto a sinking raft'. If the problem is perceived as stemming from wider service cuts, then no single organisation can be held responsible. This compounds the perception that the cause of the problem is intractable. However, service cuts do not negate the contingency of current restrictions, they simply indicate the scale of the problem.

Beyond a shortage of services, the perceived intractability of injustice may be attributed to the sense that restrictions stem from deliberate implementation of the hostile environment (Liberty, 2018), rather than from oversight. An advocate working with das3 explained that during a care assessment:

> it felt like there was a decision they had made, and I don't feel the assessment had a lot of bearing on the decision … The problem is that some people are ignorant, but do they want to know what it's really like? … that, I don't know.

The insinuation that some people do not *want* to 'know what it's really like', implies that the lack of provision is deliberate. Knowing 'what it's really like' is irrelevant if the goal is not to provide for human needs. If social logics of the primacy of the nation-state form the assumed common-sense, then the problem becomes ensuring that the 'other' does not get more than their entitlement. This is important in shaping effective intervention. Lobbying policymakers with examples of the degree of suffering will be ineffective if policy is not designed to alleviate suffering.

This is not to deny the increased attention being given to issues of disability in the asylum system. A Home Office employee (cs1) described investigating provision for disabled people in the asylum process, as 'an eye-opener'. She called for better availability of mobility aids and accessible accommodation. Her explanation of the system was as an incontestable entity, with action to address specific problems, then framed as sufficient. Similarly, a local authority director of social care explained that he would not be attending a meeting (dmas2) to discuss asylum seekers' access to social care. Instead, he advised by email (November 2018):

> We do take this issue very seriously of course and would suggest an approach to the Adult Safeguarding Board if you feel it appropriate, could be your next step.

By representing the problem as identifying individuals in need of safeguarding, the causal factors are again presented as intractable. The assumed goal is not equality or to reduce barriers to meeting human needs, but to provide sufficient response to reduce immediate risk to life.

If immigration policy is perceived as an unchangeable entity, then the restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled people become exceptions to be addressed individually. A group of Home Office employees (cs1) described their safeguarding strategies as an explanation of how they meet the needs of disabled asylum seekers. When asked how these strategies address an individual's despair arising from systematic denial of needs, two employees responded by asserting the need for people to 'voluntarily' return if their asylum claim is refused. The problem and associated blame is thereby located with the 'other', and effective policy implementation is prioritised.

Fatalistic conceptions of the system enable statutory authorities to be framed as benevolent protectors. When examples of lived experience were conveyed to a senior member of a local authority, her response was that the solutions are 'common-sense' (dmas2), and that, as she is a 'can-do' person, she would ensure that appropriate action is taken. The implication of her statement is that current restrictions result from oversight, and that her benevolent intent would ensure that problems are solved, without requiring systemic change. This perception was reiterated by a civil servant working on broader disability issues (cs4), who explained that the problem is 'not knowing what to do'. The solution is thereby presented as an issue of technical expertise and positive intent, rather than political change.

Lack of acknowledgement of the radical contingency of the existing system is affirmed by reluctance to consider the deliberate nature of policy creating current inequalities. One contributor to a wider discussion (dmas2) referred to a disabled asylum seeker having 'slipped through the net'. The suggestion that there is a net which generally provides for people's needs conceals the deliberate nature of policy restrictions. Section 115 of the Asylum and Immigration Act (1999) explicitly removes entitlement to access the welfare state. Subsequent legislation, particularly the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts, further limit access to services and support as a matter of deliberate policy, epitomised by the 'hostile environment' (Goodfellow, 2019). It is misleading to frame the problem as 'slipping through the net' when the net has been deliberately removed. If problems are presented as a series of oversights, it obscures the systematic nature of inequalities, and facilitates the presentation of any action as sufficient.

Lack of provision for the human needs of disabled asylum seekers can be understood as part of the 'othering' (Spivak, 1988) associated with immigration and with disability, discussed in Chapter 1. Hegemonic social logics of the primacy of an assumed norm result in disregard for the 'other'. The impact of such assumptions is illustrated by the contribution of an interviewee who is active in the voluntary sector and local politics (pol2). This person recalled that during discussions as to what could be learnt from experiences of hate crime, it was suggested that voluntary sector employees share information regarding the mental health needs of asylum seekers. The assumption that such action would be beneficial was repeated by a voluntary sector employee during an informal conversation. This response frames the problem as if stemming from the

victim's impairment, rather than from the perpetrator's hate crime. Both Kamil Ahmad and Bijan Ebrahimi reported their experiences of hate crime many times to multiple authorities, without adequate response. The lack of protection therefore resulted not from ignorance, but from disregard for their needs. As discussed in Chapter 1, the process of othering asserts a distinction between 'us' and 'them' (Grove and Zwi, 2006; Anderson, B.L., 2013). This distinction is reinforced, rather than contested, by lower standards of privacy for 'them' rather than 'us'. Furthermore, the suggestion that a solution would entail voluntary sector employees knowing a person's mental health experiences, reinforces disregard for the expertise of lived experience. If, instead, the problem was framed as the systemic barriers faced meeting human needs, then dominant policy narratives would be contested, and logics of rights could be asserted.

Hegemonic assumptions of fatalism regarding the scale of injustice, combined with the assumed primacy of the needs and expertise of non-disabled citizens, implicitly dislocates the collective responsibility of the social model. The result is to limit representation of the problem to pragmatic considerations of how to mitigate the worst impact of the system for certain people. Contestation becomes focused on who is worthy of support; how much support should be provided; and how distinctions should be controlled.

Political logics of overt debate focused on pragmatic adjustments to the borders of distinctions of human worth and associated entitlement.

If common-sense social logics assume systemic inequalities associated with disability and forced migration are inevitable, or if people perceive themselves as unable to effect wider change, then political logics of overt debate become focused on pragmatic goals of what is considered achievable. The problem becomes framed as adjusting the borders of eligibility, or identifying people perceived as worthy of support, thereby seeking to limit, rather than overturn, injustices.

The perceived scope of possibility shapes what is perceived as useful contestation and the agenda for overt debate. Attention is directed at managing the systemic absence of rights to support and services. If there is no additional entitlement, then as lp2 explains, identifying the need is futile:

> categorising off a group … and saying 'You meet the threshold for being disabled' when it doesn't give them any entitlements isn't particularly interesting ... If you don't meet that threshold, who cares? You don't get any special treatment.

The route to survival becomes to assert an individual's exceptional need. An employee of a voluntary sector organisation (vsi5) explained that an asylum seeker with significant health issues eventually got a bus pass, but that he:

> didn't just get one because the refugee sector people wrote a letter … he needed some posh medic person to write for him to get what he needed. And sometimes the posh medic is needed rather than the GP.

Similarly, a volunteer advice worker (uis5) working with asylum seekers recalled the quest to get a bus pass for disabled asylum seekers. She explained that she had never been successful:

> you don't get one through being an asylum seeker. You can request one … but the criteria are high.

According to the advice worker, a bus pass is at the discretion of the local authority. There would be no gain for the individual concerned if focus were directed at contesting systemic dislocation of rights. The goal, therefore, becomes framing individuals as worthy of discretionary logics of generosity.

Campaigns focused on individual examples of need may provide the appearance of contestation. However, if the agenda is focused on adjusting the balance of political logics, the social logics on which current inequalities are premised, remain unchallenged. This issue is not necessarily addressed by asserting logics of rights. A briefing from the Hear Network (2016) states that under the Transport Act (2000) all disabled people are entitled to concessionary travel, irrespective of migration status. According to them, it is necessary to assert a right rather than to frame someone as worthy of generosity. However, a voluntary sector employee, with a migration background, (vsi1), explained, 'in law it says that I am able to have this and that, but then you also go up against walls all the time'. The assertion of legal rights may be particularly limited when a person faces wider issues of immediate survival. For this reason, Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.175) argue that focusing on rights only benefits 'those with plenty of money to spend and those employed in the legal and related professions'. With or without legal rights, if people lack the means to assert those rights, the focus turns to highlighting exceptional worth.

It is important to reiterate that provision of support for disabled asylum seekers is not uniform. A legal professional (lp1) was asked what determines variations in access to services and support. His initial reply was 'postcode lottery', thereby suggesting a chaotic and unpredictable system. More specifically, lp1 elaborated that beyond chance, inequalities of support may relate to migration status, country of origin, and the nature, or cause, of impairment. This accords with evidence from wider research regarding the precarity resulting from the conditionality of support for disabled people (Dwyer, McNeill and Scullion, 2014), migrants (Dwyer and Scullion, 2014) and the shift in UK government policy to greater reliance on voluntary sector provision (Evans, K., 2011). Without clear entitlements, access to support may depend on influential advocacy. An interpreter involved in a small group discussion (laer2) noted that his presence resulted in service providers paying greater respect to the needs of das9. Entitlement appears to be affected by social status.

Disability is not always associated with lower entitlements in the asylum system. Both the legal professionals who contributed to this study spoke of disability as a path to

greater entitlement. As one person (lp2) remarked, 'if an asylum seeker is not disabled when they arrive it would be helpful if they become disabled quick'. Capacity for legal contestation is not necessarily dependent on need. A different legal professional (lp1) explained:

> The immigration system as a whole is just inherently racially discriminatory. But you can't really do anything about that … there is an Equalities Act exemption for decisions made under the Immigration Act in relation to race discrimination … no doubt in recognition that immigration laws disproportionately target brown people … within that cohort that is racially discriminated against … we can help people with disabilities … because we have additional laws at our disposal … But it feels a bit wrong when at its heart you know they are all discriminated against on the basis of their race … that's just not something that equality legislation will recognise.

This person recognises the injustice of the current system, but his attention must be on gaining the best outcome for his client. Challenging the racism underpinning inequalities of immigration policy would not support the immediate needs of a client. The focus must therefore remain on goals that are potentially achievable. The systemic roots of the problem thereby remain uncontested. If all asylum seekers have significant unmet needs, then the problem becomes which needs carry additional entitlement. This may be an issue of pragmatic decision-making as to which aspects of need or identity to foreground. Individual symptoms of disability may then become one of the criteria of worth. In some circumstances, such as the VPRS (2014), being identified as 'vulnerable' may result in improved access to support.

The association between labels of 'vulnerability' and improved support are not necessarily advantageous to the person concerned. According to lp2, if disability is a source of agency in a person's asylum claim or entitlement to support, then 'it contributes to making people cling to their symptoms and define themselves in that way. It's very disabling'. This perception reinforces dominant policy discourse of disability as an embodied problem, to be addressed by individual endeavour, rather than a social model focus on collective responsibility to facilitate access to services and support. The binary logics of defence and generosity are reinforced by the dislocation of the social model. Similarly, as Ticktin observes (2011, p.4) regarding French immigration policy:

> sick bodies are given recognition by the state … but only as long as they remain sick; this gives immigrants' rights, not as equal citizens, but only insofar as they are – and remain – disabled.

Ticktin (2011, p.9) describes undocumented migrants in France relying on 'stories of suffering in order to be heard'. Entitlement then depends on embodiment of 'this paradoxically privileged position as the most disenfranchised, the most wretched of the earth, the most worthy of care' (2011, p.11). Similarly, Naomi Millner (2011, p.325) describes how in Calais refugee camps, support is framed as 'benevolent actions of

generous citizens' towards those victims perceived as worthy. The dislocation of logics of rights results in survival depending on portraying oneself as worthy of generosity.

Entitlement becomes dependent on the *cause* of need, rather than the need itself. The focus of pragmatic contestation therefore turns to defining categories of entitlement and identifying people with eligible attributes. People with different subject positions focused their attention on two key overlapping categories of exceptional entitlement: labels of vulnerability and evidence of torture.

Categories of exceptional entitlement

People with different subject positions in the immigration sector drew on euphemisms of vulnerability to refer to disability, thereby reinforcing policy narratives and further dislocating collective responsibility and logics of rights. A legal professional (lp2) observed that when disabled people are referred to at all in the asylum system, it is always with the label 'vulnerable'. Similarly, a Home Office policy officer (cs2) referred to 'people with vulnerabilities'. This repetition of policy discourse is sometimes made without comment, at other times it is described as strategic. A voluntary sector employee (vsd2) working in the immigration sector, defines herself as disabled, is involved in disabled people's organisations, yet referred to disabled asylum seekers as 'vulnerable customers'. Her rationale is that this reflects Home Office language and thereby facilitates communication: 'it's just gonna take much longer for them to understand it if you don't use their language'. Describing asylum seekers as 'customers' reflects Home Office reference to their 'business model' (UKVI, 2017), framing the immigration system as part of the market economy. The repetition of euphemisms of policy discourse may facilitate communication with Home Office staff, but reference to 'vulnerable customers' reinforces hegemonic individualistic conceptions of responsibility. The result is to dislocate the collective responsibility of the social model of disability, the UNCRPD and the welfare state. Hegemonic representation of the problem is thereby reinforced, rather than contested.

Fatalistic conceptions of the social order frame the quest as being to identify and highlight evidence that an individual is exceptionally worthy, and therefore entitled to mitigation of wider restrictions. Evidence of apparent 'vulnerability' may achieve this goal, as may evidence of torture. Proof that an individual has survived torture may provide the evidence of persecution necessary for legitimacy under the 1951 Refugee Convention. Therefore, needs stemming from torture carry greater entitlement than similar needs stemming from other causes. Anthropologist Tobias Kelly (2012, p.754) argues, 'It is not the quality, or nature, of the pain that singles out torture survivors, but the specific cause of their distress'. Distinctions in the entitlements results in people with different subject positions encouraging asylum seekers to disclose experiences of torture. Like labels of vulnerability, this approach reinforces hegemonic dislocation of individual rights and collective responsibility. Certain individuals become framed as exceptionally worthy and therefore deserving of generosity, without contesting logics of

defence against the wider population of asylum seekers. Medical evidence of torture may provide what Didier Fassin and Estelle d'Halluin (2005, p.606) describe as 'the tenuous thread on which hangs the entire existence - both physical and political - of the asylum seeker'. The problem then becomes, not removing systemic barriers to meeting human needs, but identifying and proving the source of individual symptoms. The immediate concern is then how to facilitate disclosure of such experiences, balancing concern for possible detrimental psychological impact with the potential for greater entitlement.

There are many problems associated with providing evidence of torture. Fassin and d'Halluin (2005, p.598) explain that 'Scars, both physical and psychological, are the tangible sign that torture did indeed take place'. However, some symptoms are more visible and provable than others. Despite the prevalence of mental distress among asylum seekers, several interviewees (lp1, laer3, pol2, vsi3) perceived people with mental health support needs to experience additional barriers. One person working with people affected by torture (vsi3), believed that psychological impact is less readily addressed than physical symptoms. As a legal professional (lp1) explained, 'self-reporting is received so sceptically'. It appears easier for people with visible scars (das16) to access support, as will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 6, than for people with mental distress or invisible impairments, irrespective of current impact.

The potentially crucial significance of evidence of torture, in relation to entitlement to support, does not necessarily facilitate disclosure. One asylum sector employee (vsi5) explained how one person:

> didn't say and they didn't say, and they got detained and they didn't say ... Unbelievable amounts of stress and trauma that they went through in order to not say … the three most trusted people in that person's life … met them once a month for a year and went through their case to help them understand what was going on and then finally it was disclosed bit, by bit, by bit.

As she elaborated, some people have experienced:

> unspeakable things … they won't say them because it's so difficult to say them. So there's also a totally, and completely, hidden cohort of people … that has gone through something like that and never spoken of it. And only when you spend loads of time with people … then finally you can realise. And by that point the Home Office is like, well, you're obviously lying because why didn't you tell us about your sexual abuse earlier?

According to a torture specialist (vsi3), sometimes people 'may not be aware that what's happened to them is torture … and it may not be something that people ask them about in ways that facilitate disclosure'. Even when people do speak about such things, sometimes UK medics are ill-equipped to address the symptoms. According to one interviewee (laer3), a torture survivor went to the doctor with knee problems resulting from having been beaten for 40 days. The doctor responded with dietary advice and

referral to physiotherapy. If a person discloses their torture to a person who provides inappropriate response, then it may discourage further disclosure. Furthermore, capacity to speak about traumatic experiences may depend on the nature of ongoing psychological impact (Basoglu et al., 2001). Scars may be considered an indicator of legitimacy; however, they may also be associated with shame, trauma, and continued grief.

The barriers to acquiring evidence of torture are recognised by a Home Office employee in a discussion group (cs1):

> someone with PTSD for example, it's well known that people won't disclose that until they feel safe, so actually it might not even come out at all during the whole asylum process … what we have to do is ensure that staff have got the right level of awareness and training to spot the signs and then to know what to do about it

If inequalities associated with evidence of torture are uncontested, then this reinforces hegemonic distinctions of apparent human worth.

Evidence of torture may be significant to an asylum claim, but once a person has migration status, the cause of an impairment becomes insignificant. At this stage, the existence of an impairment which results in eligibility for disability benefits could make a significant difference to family income. The Welfare Reform Act (2012) introduced a cap on benefit payments unless a family member is disabled. One local authority employee (laer3), working with resettled refugees, referred to someone who 'doesn't see herself as disabled… she can do everything for herself' and tries to hide her impairment. Nonetheless, her husband was keen for her to apply for disability benefits to increase their income. The issue according to laer3 is that:

> at a really practical level, for people who are very poor, it's all about getting disability benefits, because they passport you to different things … it releases him from the benefit cap.

Without refugee status, there is no disability benefit, let alone benefit cap. These complicated and fluctuating implications of disability result from the break between need and entitlement to support, yet this break remains hegemonically uncontested.

Without entitlement based on need, as one legal professional (lp2) explained, extra scrutiny of categories of entitlement is to be expected. The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) proved the validity of this expectation by warning that if there are possibilities of entitlement associated with labels of vulnerability, then people may be encouraged to 'play the system' (Bolt, 2019, p.14 and 23). The impact of this on individual experience is highlighted by a legal dispute brought by the Home Office against an asylum seeker (KV) with scars caused by having been burned with metal rods (2014; 2019). The apparently superior prospects for asylum seekers with torture wounds may explain the Home Office prosecution questioning

whether acupuncture could be used to enable toleration of the pain if such wounds were 'self-inflicted by proxy'. As discussed by barrister Colin Yeo (2019a), these allegations were judged by the supreme court to be without basis, providing further indication of a pervasive culture of disbelief (Anderson, J. et al., 2014) in the immigration system. Nonetheless, when survival depends on evidence of torture, there may be times when extreme measures *are* taken by those seeking sanctuary. Ticktin explains that in France, where there is provision for 'exceptional means of entry' (2011, p.9) for migrants with proven humanitarian care needs, the result is that people sometimes resort to 'physical injury or infection to claim basic rights' (2011, p.190). In the context of denial of support to the wider migrant population, greater entitlement associated with care needs exacerbates, rather than addresses, inequalities. Whether or not a person has been tortured, a system that depends on such evidence breaks the association between need and entitlement to support. When the overt agenda is focused on managing the impact of existing inequalities, or identifying people worthy of generosity, the result is to reinforce systemic inequalities and the dislocation of rights.

Fatalistic understanding of wider immigration politics shape people's stated motivation to focus on individual acts of generosity and compassion, rather than on assertion of rights or systemic change. Evidence of suffering based on torture or vulnerability becomes evidence of being worthy of compassion. Fassin describes this as 'compassionate attachment to individual suffering' (2005, p.372). Despite the assertion by a local organiser (uis6) that he was motivated by shame at Britain's initial lack of response, his discourse of generosity and pride reinforces hegemonic distinctions. He described his goal as seeking to avoid confronting the 'loaded' or 'complex' issues of the wider immigration system. His approach reflects Ticktin's (2011, p.19) view that 'those who act in the name of the moral imperative generally claim to be apolitical'. However, she goes on to explain that 'rather than remaining outside the system, in their desire to not engage with politics, they work to reinforce the status quo' (ibid). Among contributors to this study, there was no direct reference to the need for logics of defence against disabled asylum seekers. However, providing discretionary support to selected refugees reinforces fantasmatic logics of pride associated with logics of generosity towards those framed as worthy. Such discourse frames the givers as arbiters of entitlement and therefore as morally superior to the receivers. The implication is that 'we' the generous citizens, have something to protect, thereby legitimising wider discourse of defence. The result is to reinforce systemic inequalities, precarity and hegemonic discourse. As Ticktin (2011, p.21) continues, 'the anti-politics of care is not about the politics of care gone awry; anti-politics lies at its very core'. Acts of apparent generosity towards selected people may improve some lives but reinforce hegemonic inequalities.

The transfer of responsibility for immigration from the state to the voluntary sector evokes political logics of generosity, reinforced with fantasmatic logics of pride, as discussed in Chapter 4. People made destitute by the state may rely on voluntary

donations for food and shelter. This may build relationships of care and solidarity. However, the relationship is inherently unequal, based on host kindness and beneficiary need, rather than formal rights and obligations. Relying on the voluntary sector to provide for people with mental health support needs is particularly problematic. One volunteer (udc2) described hosting someone with what she described as 'active PTSD'. She recalled:

> it was really not appropriate for her to be here. I mean, fortunately, everybody pulled out the stops and moved her into supported accommodation, which is where she needed to be.

This person is clear that voluntary sector support may be appropriate for some people but not others. Acts of benevolence or solidarity may mitigate the impact of systemic restrictions. However, such acts may also enable the state to reduce its role, transferring responsibility to the voluntary sector and thereby affirming the discursive shift of focus from logics of rights to logics of discretionary generosity.

Whether intentional or because of confusion among service providers, asylum seekers face barriers accessing the rights which do exist, including access to healthcare. A legal professional (lp1) explained that GP surgeries have been known to create criteria based on migration status for registration with a GP:

> there's no legal basis for restricting access to GP surgeries… You can't just create your own criteria 'cause then that's race discrimination … but …as soon as you raise that, they correct themselves and say it was all a terrible misunderstanding.

Uncontested social logics of asylum seekers as the 'other', combined with political logics of generosity and the dislocation of rights, may facilitate the framing of access to basic needs such as medical care as discretionary. This framing of the problem allows provision of support to be underpinned with fantasmatic logics of pride, rather than with obligation.

Fantasmatic logics of pride, in place of rights, reinforce wider hegemonic representations.

Discursive representations of discretionary generosity are complemented with fantasmatic logics of pride. When das9 was experiencing mental distress exacerbated by destitution, considerable lobbying resulted in a local authority care assessment. He was then provided with financial support of approximately £5 per day and hostel accommodation. The outsourcing of statutory obligations from the state to the voluntary sector housing provider may account for the framing of such minimal provision as an act of generosity. According to his interpreter and close friend, the providers were 'acting as if it was a favour… privilege' for which das9 should be grateful. With disdain for such framing, the interpreter added: 'imagine it… it is an insane world'. His contestation of such framing and his solidarity with das9 could be understood as

counter-hegemonic. However, in the absence of organised resistance, this has little power to dislocate hegemonic discourse.

Discourse of generosity complemented with pride was pronounced among people providing support for refugees resettled under the VPRS. The scheme was welcomed by people with diverse subject positions, including a national politician (pol1), voluntary sector employee (vsd2), and local community organiser (uis6), as if acts of generosity were unquestionably positive. In meetings at both small town and district level (lm3 and dcm2), people working in paid or unpaid capacity presented themselves as proudly providing gifts, rather than as political activists demanding rights, or contesting systemic deficiencies.

Philanthropic support can be framed as an indicator of the moral standing of the provider. The social identity theory developed by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner (2001) provides useful analysis. It attributes the need to locate 'us' as better than 'them' as stemming from people's need to belong to a social group and to believe that their group is better than others. If social identity is located at the level of the nation-state, then refugees may be framed as the outsiders, with Home Office (cs1) and local authority (laer1) staff locating blame with disabled asylum seekers and refugees. In contrast, voluntary sector employees contributing to this study routinely present themselves as better than the Home Office, even when relying on pragmatic repetition of hegemonic discourse. If support were framed as an issue of equal rights, then distinctions of social identity between 'us' and 'them' would become irrelevant to the goal of removing barriers to accessing these rights.

Collective community pride may be enhanced by welcoming refugees if support is framed as an issue of discretionary generosity. At a small-town meeting (lm3), presenters focused on the special reception offered to two Syrian families. Members of the public were reported to have 'donated loads and loads of stuff'. It was described as 'inspiring' and 'typical' of the 'community spirit', which 'epitomises' the town. Such small numbers of refugees relative to the 20,000 people to be resettled in the whole country did not deter organisers from repeatedly asserting a belief in their own generosity. Drawing on fantasmatic logics of pride, based on unevidenced assumptions that the welcoming of two families contained lessons for the wider UK population, there were questions as to how the work could be promoted at a national level. Such assumed superiority contrasts with a study of geographical differences in attitude to migration (Crawley, Drinkwater and Kausar, 2019), in which it was found that out of 12 regions of Britain, the region under discussion had the third lowest level of support for asylum seekers. Like the initial announcements of the VPRS (Great Britain. The Home Office and The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, 2014) discussed in Chapter 4, the number of people welcomed is framed as less significant than the generosity of response towards those selected. Fantasmatic logics of pride are emotional and unquantifiable. Without acknowledgement of possible alienating inferences for non-Christians, the small-town meeting (lm3) was held in a church, with local organisers

speaking from the pulpit, thereby evoking almost religious zealotry to affirm pride in 'our' goodness. The purpose was not to discuss the inequalities of migration support or to contest the asylum system, but to highlight 'our' achievements.

Similar discursive representations of generosity and pride were used at a district-wide meeting (dcm2) of elected Councillors, Council employees and volunteers, regarding the welcoming of selected Syrian refugees. Such is the need to assert pride, that my attempts to discuss recent immigration legislation and the resultant increased restrictions being imposed on the wider population of migrants, were met with derision and requests from elected Councillors to avoid 'politics'. Five years after Theresa May had referred to her intention to create a 'hostile environment' (Kirkup, 2012), and with ongoing widespread media coverage of that goal, meeting attendees denied it had happened. When evidence was provided, one Councillor asserted that it only applied to 'illegals', not to the 'good' refugees being hosted locally. Hegemonic distinctions of entitlement are thereby affirmed while people simultaneously present themselves as if introducing innovative solutions. This exchange highlights the irrelevance of evidence in maintaining fantasmatic logics of pride. Hegemonic discourse is reinforced by the incontestable nature of fantasmatic logics of pride, complemented by political logics of 'our' generosity, and underpinned by uncontested social logics regarding the primacy of citizens of the nation-state.

Local level meetings focused on discussing implementation of the VPRS, framed as issues of generosity, rather than the defensive measures targeted at asylum seekers. However, according to national politician (pol1), inequalities of entitlements between asylum seekers and people selected for the VPRS, is not a reason to criticise the scheme. Instead, he thought the approach should be extended to more people. Such an approach seeks to adjust the borders of entitlement to create more exceptions but fails to contest the systematic hostility of government policy. In contrast, a local politician (pol2) described the divisive impact of the VPRS on migrant communities. More specifically, an impromptu discussion group of people working with asylum seekers and with refugees resettled under this scheme (laer2), described the impact that these distinctions appear to have on people's psychological state. In their experiences, many asylum seekers act as if they are beholden and immensely grateful for the smallest support. In contrast, people selected for the VPRS are described as assertive and demanding. Returning to Fanon's (1967) argument that racism impacts on people's perceptions of themselves, distinctions in entitlements may impact on people's own behaviour or other people's perceptions thereof.

People with direct roles of policy implementation were found to reinforce social and political logics with fantasmatic logics such as to frame any services that are provided as if worthy of pride. A senior Home Office policy officer complained in a meeting (nm1a) that he was fed up with being lobbied by NGOs, when, as he put it, 'It's about working together to make the world a better place'. Similarly, his colleague described the motivation to do the 'right thing'. Such distinctions between 'right' and 'wrong' serve

to assert self-worth. The tendency to frame oneself as free of blame is perhaps necessary for emotional preservation. Only a disability activist (udc5) overtly acknowledged collective blame for deliberate and systemic problems. Without having taken a representative approach to sampling, I do not pass judgement as to how unusual this admission may be. However, if discursive explanations of the experiences of disabled asylum seekers are dominated by fatalism, then any mitigation of ongoing problems may be presented as evidence that 'we' are doing our bit, thereby evoking logics of generosity and associated pride. The problem becomes framed as how to mitigate the suffering of certain people, rather than how to contest the wider system and assert alternative forms of organising society, distributing resources, or judging human worth.

Logics of generosity enable service providers to be framed as saviours, rather than as obligated to ensure rights are met. This is not unique to the framing of intersectional minority needs. Mondon and Winter (2020, p.215) accuse what they call the 'self-righteous liberal centre' of 'propping up systemic inequalities and injustice' by diverting attention from systemic racism. This is, however, not to suggest that contestation is easy. As Zoe Gardner, an immigration sector employee, tweeted on 19th May 2020, 'People always tell me to keep hope... As if anyone in this line of work has had hope for a decade? Working without hope because we must & if we didn't it would be so much worse'. According to Goodfellow (2019), the hostile environment not only affects migrants but also organisations that support migrants, such that few people can continue this work for long periods. Focusing on pragmatic targets of reducing incidents of injustice may provide people with the sense of achievement necessary to continue such work, however, if those targets leave causal factors uncontested, then the perceived impossibility of alternatives may be heightened.

5.3 Drivers and impact of current discursive explanations

My analysis has shown that hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, underpinning government policies, are reinforced by people with diverse subject positions. As Goodfellow (2019, p.37) explains, 'even some parts of the immigration sector have helped sustain a "hierarchy of migrants"'. The contrasting entitlements of asylum seekers and refugees resettled under the VPRS is a clear example of this hierarchy. Even among critics of the hostile environment and logics of defence, the generosity of the VPRS is assumed to be a positive alternative (pol1, vsd2). Normative framing of pragmatism results in the apparent generosity of the VPRS being presented as the best that can be expected. However, as I have argued, not only do logics of generosity and pride complement logics of defence, but such discourse also obscures the radical contingency of the social order, thereby hindering the development of alternatives. Yet, hegemonic discourse changes. As Mondon and Winter argue:

> ideas that begin as simply unacceptable can become acceptable or even "common-sense" … a critical mass can alter established beliefs and change the landscape more

> or less radically, bringing social groups (and demands associated with particular groups) into the mainstream and rendering their newly acquired rights to something natural or normal. (2020, p.113)

The contingency of hegemonic assumptions is demonstrated by the change in the discursive representation of disability since the advent of the social model (Oliver and Barnes, 2012).

The reinforcement of hegemonic discourse is not necessarily deliberate. As Gramsci explains, cultural hegemony shapes the assumptions and institutions of everyday life. Glynos and Howarth (2007, p.104) observe that many everyday activities, 'from making breakfast in the morning to the successful delivery of children to school … contribute to the successful reproduction of various systems of social relations'. These tasks may be routinely undertaken without analysing the implications or the alternatives. As Glynos and Howarth (2007, p.120) continue, often invisible everyday inequalities 'may involve and rely upon relations of subordination, but they need not be experienced as oppressive, nor regarded as unjust'. People with diverse subject positions may perceive inequalities associated with disability and forced migration as unfortunate but inevitable. Without awareness of intersectional historic struggles to address systemic barriers, such as could be provided by the social model of disability (Oliver, 1983) combined with critiques of the primacy of the nation-state (Hobsbawm, 1975; Anderson, B., 1983), the sense of injustice may be directed into multiple liberal struggles to meet an individual's immediate needs. The systemic roots and contingency of current injustice are not dependent on being acknowledged as such.

Repetition of dominant narratives reinforces the hegemony and hinders the development of alternatives, irrespective of whether that is the intention. However, such repetition may appear strategic to people seeking career advancement or to those seeking pragmatic policy adjustments. As discussed previously, for vsd2, effective communication would take so much longer without repeating the language of the people you seek to change, in this case, the Home Office. However, this assumes that the objective is pragmatic reform, or policing. Structural change, or a moment of politics in which those without a voice assert their voice, is actively hindered by reinforcement of hegemonic discursive representations underpinning the problem.

The restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers are determined by deliberate policies, rather than oversights, as explained in Chapter 4. Without active contestation, this analysis indicates that the discursive explanations on which current immigration and welfare reform policies are based, are continually reinforced by people with diverse roles and responsibilities. It is, however, reiterated that interviewees may not necessarily recount their own views. This is particularly anticipated where people were interviewed in a group or in the context of their employment. Furthermore, civil servants may perceive themselves as neither

responsible for the consequences of policy, nor as having options beyond implementation.

In addition to the dislocation of collective responsibility and the reduction of state services which are core to neoliberal ideology, the systematic denial of rights to disabled asylum seekers stems in part from both racism and ableism. An asylum sector employee (vsi5), who previously worked in Social Services, believed that racism is core to the lack of attention paid to disabled asylum seekers. She explained that in Social Services, 'If they're experiencing autism, people are like oh, it's a cultural difference. So 'their' autism and 'our' autism must be different, and so it must just be a weird, foreign thing'. More explicitly, as explained above, a legal professional (lp1) described the immigration system as inherently racist. Such approaches, combined with the deliberate denial of services and support to asylum seekers, creates a system which is both racist and disabling. Yet, even those interviewees (vsi5 and lp1) who acknowledged the problem, framed it as an observation rather than as something that could be contested. Similarly, the Home Office employee who, in a meeting (nm1), referred to his motivation to do the 'right' thing, was not suggesting he would address the systemic racism or disabling impact of denying access to services and support. He framed the problem as identifying individual oversights rather than systemic contestation.

Speaking more specifically about the influence of racism and ableism, one disability activist (udc5) described barriers within disabled people's organisations and asylum sector organisations. He explained that organisations reliant on external funding, perhaps inevitably prioritise employees able to communicate with funders. This includes having the same language, culture, and skillset as funders. His analysis is similar to the findings of Weisinger et al. (2016), who explain the disproportionate number of middle-class volunteers in the voluntary sector stems, in part, from perceptions that:

> Middle-class young people are more capable in part because of educational advantages that they enjoy. But there is also a closer cultural fit between the young people and staff members. Thus, staff members feel it is easier to get their work done effectively with middle-class young volunteers. (2016, p.19s)

According to udc5, the problem increased after the introduction of direct payments, when disabled people's organisations changed from being primarily peer support groups, to becoming service providers, reliant on local authority funding. He believed that the unspoken ethos from funders was that trustworthy organisations must be led by 'middle-class, white, disabled people that we know'. Organisations may frame themselves as peer support, but if they are dominated by people from a privileged background, using 'expert' language, then people with other identities and backgrounds may be alienated. Attempts to 'reach out' to groups construed as 'hard-to-reach' are then impeded by the power imbalance. For disabled asylum seekers, barriers

associated with racism, disability, social class, and cultural and linguistic differences are combined with the immediacy of struggles for survival. In the context of such barriers and without obvious material benefits, it is unsurprising if disabled asylum seekers are not engaged in the disabled people's movement.

The contributions from people with different subject positions highlight the lack of interaction between the immigration sector and the disabled people's movement. The resultant lack of understanding of ongoing barriers, as well as previous struggles and achievements, hinders the scope for awareness and contestation of the regressive impact of current hegemonic discourse. The social model and the rights enshrined in the UNCRPD bring highly relevant insights to the disabling impact of current immigration policy. A disabled citizen and activist (udc5) explained that seeing the world 'through the lens of the social model' leads him to focus on social constructions of problems. He criticised an asylum sector document in which the problems experienced by a disabled asylum seeker were described as stemming from the person's inability to speak English. If the problem is represented as located with the individual's lack of English, then the person may be blamed for failing and portrayed as a burden. If the problem is framed as lack of interpreter, accessible English classes, or the daily struggles which impede capacity to learn a new language, then the focus is on society's responsibilities and the need for systemic change. As such, a social model approach assumes social logics of equality and collective responsibility, from which political logics of solidarity rather than generosity are drawn.

The repercussions of failing to contest causal issues or hegemonic representations of the problem are acknowledged by some contributors. A legal professional (lp1) described how if the problem is not addressed at the causal level, there will be wider repercussions. The denial of healthcare stems from what he describes as:

> manufactured outrage about health tourism, migrants needing the NHS and so on… And in response … they are setting up the infrastructure for paying … private patients across the NHS and before you know, it will all be there, and they started it all on migrants 'cause no one was going to speak up for them, and it's all in place for them to broaden it out to the rest of the population. It will progress from migrants to those who brought it on themselves, the obese, smokers, alcoholics. Yeah it will creep through, but you start on unpopular people and before you know it, it's too late to step back.

Failure to challenge hegemonic discourse regarding both immigration and disability enabled the dislocation of rights to spread from the immigration sector to the wider population as discussed in Chapter 4. Unless effective means of contestation are developed, this process looks set to continue.

Conclusion

Despite professed concern regarding the experiences of disabled asylum seekers, interviewees with diverse subject positions reflected and reinforced the hegemony of

the policy discourse analysed in Chapter 4. With fatalistic assumptions that the system is intractable, social logics of the prime legitimacy of non-disabled citizens remain uncontested. As such, any support provided to disabled asylum seekers is presented as if sufficient, with debate reduced to pragmatic goals of identifying people worthy of support. This does not challenge systemic restrictions and inevitably leaves some people without support. The existence of distinctions in human worth is hereby affirmed, with the regressive assumption that entitlement depends on the cause, rather than the existence, of need. Provision of support for those people framed as worthy evokes logics of generosity complemented by fantasmatic logics of pride. Perhaps most significantly, the discursive framing used by people with different subject positions obscures the radical contingency of any social order, thereby not only affirming hegemonic discourse but hindering development of alternatives.

Whether the restrictions faced by asylum seekers result from oversight, wider policy objectives, or deliberate intent may appear irrelevant to lived experiences of suffering. However, understanding discursive representations of a problem is essential to understanding how the system could be, or is already being, contested. If policy is designed to create sufficient hostility to prompt people to leave the UK, then highlighting the suffering that is caused is unlikely to result in significant change.

A fundamental gap in the perceptions of people with a wide range of subject positions is the knowledge from disabled asylum seekers themselves. Instead, relevant knowledge and information are presented as if located with people in similar positions to themselves. In contrast, and despite the powerful hegemonic role of the institution, a World Bank report asserts:

> The real repositories of local knowledge on disability … are the disabled people that live there, and the most efficient way to tap into their local knowledge is to provide them with mechanisms for making their needs known. (Metts, 2000, p.xv)

The perspectives, insights or 'repositories' of knowledge in people with lived experience of disability and forced migration are investigated in the next chapter. This is critical not only to understanding the problem to be addressed, but also in showing that respect for knowledge which is often disregarded may facilitate effective contestation of the hegemony.

Chapter 6: Discursive representation of disability and forced migration by people with lived experience of the impact of current restrictions and inequalities.

> the epistemologies to which western modernity ascribes value; in this case, mostly those produced by science and biomedical discourse … ha[ve] had tremendous consequences for disabled people everywhere because only knowledge constructed within the parameters of normalcy are in fact considered valid.
>
> (Bê, 2019, p.16)

To conclude analysis of discursive representations of problems associated with disability and forced migration, this chapter turns to the perceptions of people with lived experience of the impact of current policy and practice. This builds on the analysis in Chapters 4 and 5. The analysis in Chapter 4 focused on the discourse shaping current entitlements associated with government immigration and welfare reform policies. This showed that despite little direct reference to intersectional issues, there are growing commonalities in the representations of these two policy areas. Chapter 5 explored the perspectives of people with diverse subject positions for the implementation of policy and practice in the asylum sector and the disabled people's movement. There was broad consensus that the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers are unjust. Yet the development of alternatives is hindered by fatalistic understanding of the assumed lack of potential for systemic change, reinforcing rather than contesting hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, even among people explicitly opposed to government policy.

As previously stressed, this study is not designed to catalogue the nature or scale of injustices experienced. However, in the face of hegemonic marginalisation of disabled asylum seekers, it is important to assert the significance of people's lives, expertise and contribution. This chapter begins by analysing the context for the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. The asylum system includes systematic restrictions to the services and support necessary to meet human needs. These restrictions are underpinned by hegemonic social logics assuming the prime entitlement of non-disabled citizens. Analysis then turns to the perceptions of people with lived experience of the impact of such policy and practice. People criticise experiences of deliberately punitive policies, stemming from a climate of hostility, chaos and the sufficientarian approach discussed in Chapter 1. Contestation of political logics does not, however, automatically result in contesting the legitimacy of hegemonic social logics.

Despite some commonalities with other contributors to this research, the 'scream' (Holloway, 2002) of injustice expressed by contributors with lived experience is distinct from the pragmatic discourse described in earlier chapters. Nonetheless, survival may depend on managing, rather than contesting, hegemonic distinctions of entitlement. Apparent consensus as to the injustice of current restrictions does not alter experiences

of the impact. This section therefore concludes by considering the administration of current injustice, drawing on Arendt's (1964) conception of the 'banality of evil'. Current policy restrictions reinforce hegemonic inequalities irrespective of whether that is the intention. The next chapter explores how discursive representations of the problem shape perceived solutions.

6.1 The context of regressive and disabling restrictions

The experiences of disabled asylum seekers must be understood in the context of wider issues of disability, introduced in Chapter 1. The UNCRPD (2006) was developed in recognition of the need to address barriers meeting human needs. These needs cannot be met in isolation. In a lecture regarding the nature of vulnerability, Judith Butler (2015b) argues that all humans are inevitably dependent on 'other bodies and networks of support'. Lack of access to such 'networks of support', can be disabling. As summarised in Figure 3, disability results from barriers preventing people with impairments from meeting human needs. The deliberate restrictions of access to services and support for asylum seekers result in a particularly disabling system, as illustrated in Figure 4. In addition to the physical impact, the stress associated with managing these restrictions, together with the trauma stemming from previous experiences, often imposes an insupportable burden on mental health. Asylum seekers contributing to this study described high levels of mental distress. As das8 explained:

> this mental you know… it has been brought by the problems … I'm taking medication for mental but … there is another thing that can control your things. If the things are better, I think all can be well.

This is in accordance with the findings of wider studies highlighting the impact of asylum restrictions on mental health (Turner et al., 2003; Bhugra, Craig and Bhui, 2010; Lawlor, Sher and Stateva, 2015). Lack of ability to meet human needs is disabling and can create mental distress (Ferguson, 2017) irrespective of migration status, but the restrictions faced by asylum seekers are particularly acute. The current system creates impairments and further disables people with existing impairments.

Figure 3: The link between impairment and disability

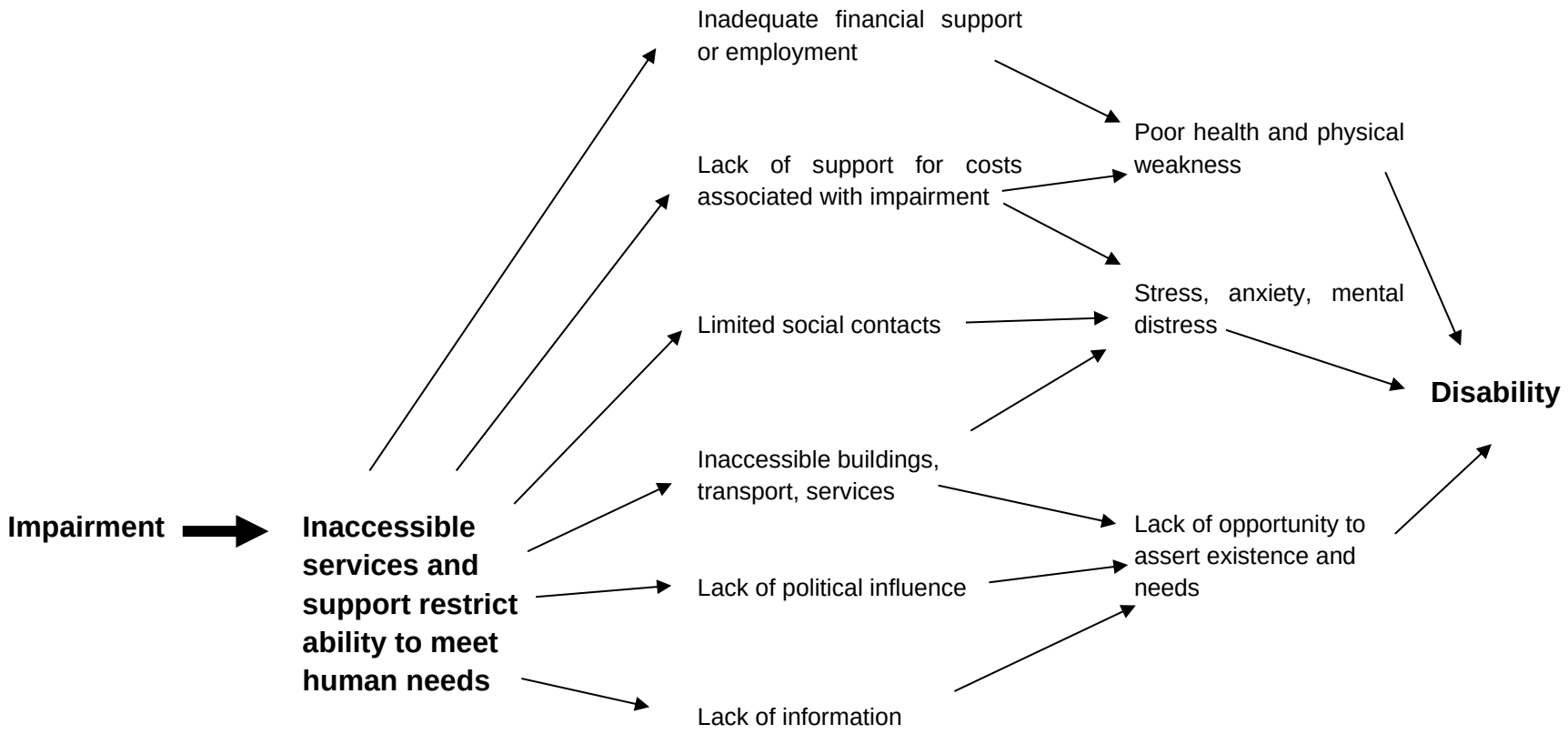
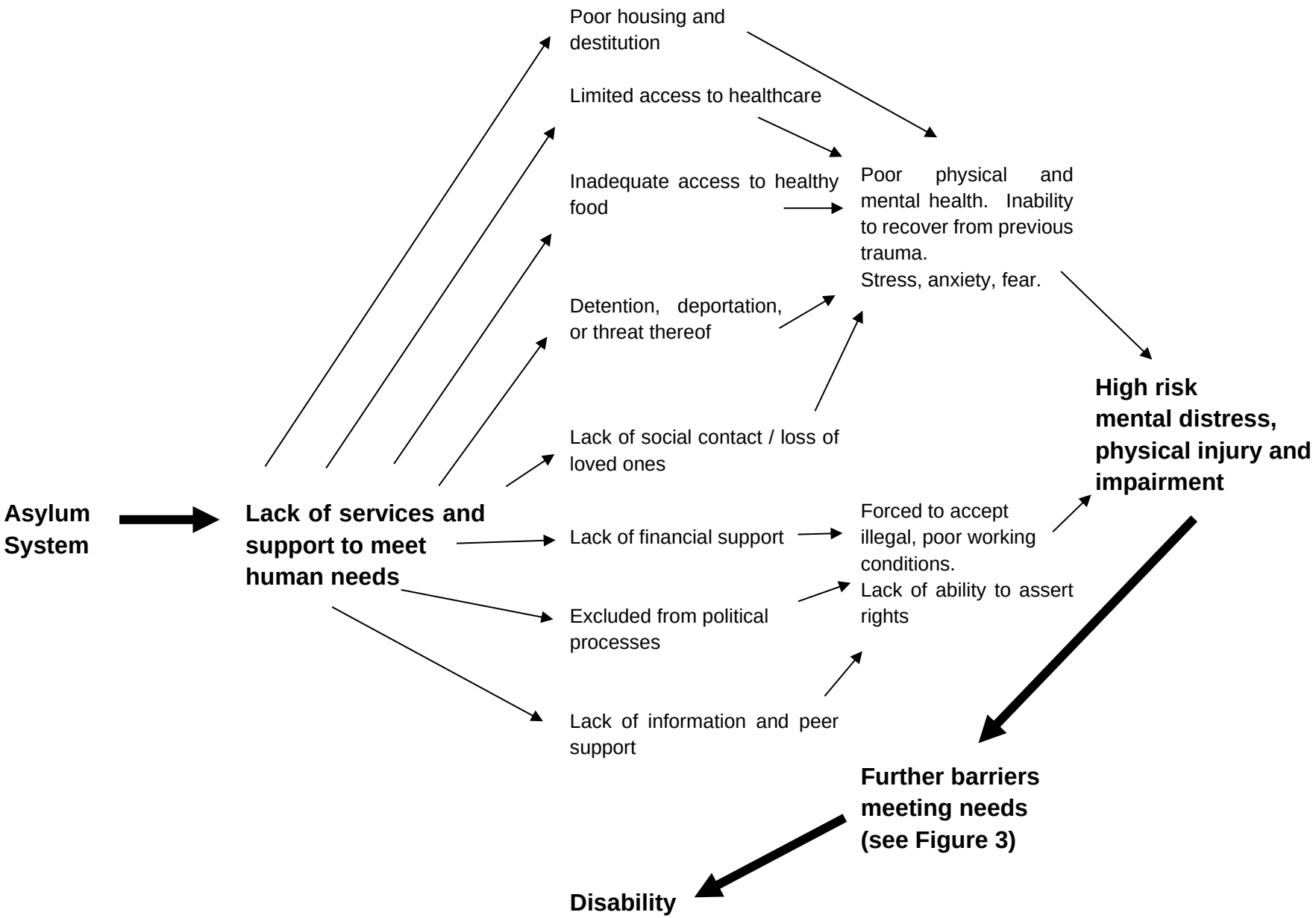


Figure 4: Disabling impact of UK asylum system



Issues of mental health must be seen in a broader political context. According to research carried out by the Mental Health Foundation (2017), the prevalence of mental distress in the UK is significantly higher among the lower paid: 73% of people earning less than £1200 per month report experiencing mental distress compared with 59% of people earning over £3701 per month. Ferguson (2017, p.12) argues that this relates to 'benefit cuts … and a brutal sanctions regime', combined with pressure to accept exploitative working conditions. He argues (2017, pp.13-14) that the increase in individual psychological struggles is directly related to the reduction in collective union power and that 'stress appears to be standing in for older concepts like injustice, inequality and frustration, seen at the level of the individual rather than of the wider workforce'. It is unsurprising if there are high rates of mental distress among asylum seekers who experience the stress of migration, struggles to meet human needs, and displacement from loved ones.

Contrary to the assumptions of some non-disabled people (particularly laer1) discussed in Chapter 5, no disabled person contributing to this study spoke of their impairment as a source of shame. Using an unstructured approach, I did not ask anyone about their impairment or medical histories. However, several disabled asylum seekers spoke particularly readily about their mental health support needs, without the apparent stigma commonly associated with mental distress (Gaebel, Rössler and Sartorius, 2017). It may be that this openness was motivated by the need to foreground evidence of disadvantage associated with entitlement to support. Apparent lack of stigma may also stem from the attribution of mental distress to the punitive and disabling nature of the asylum system, rather than to individual weakness.

Irrespective of the disabling impact of current policy and practice, disabled asylum seekers may be unable or unwilling to take a leading role in contestation. Lived experience of disability may provide people with distinct epistemological standpoints, or what Johnson and McRuer refer to as 'cripistemologies' (2014), which could provide crucial insights with which to contest the hegemony. However, the expertise of people who Gramsci refers to as the 'subaltern' is systematically undervalued by the dominant social class. Returning to Rancière's (1999) description of 'logos' discussed in Chapter 1, the marginalisation of disabled asylum seekers can be understood as stemming from being framed as 'beings of no ac/count' (1999, p.24). What Rancière (2010) describes as the aesthetics of politics render some experiences and associated perceptions visible, while others are obscured. The distinctions between whose perspectives are visible and whose are not, are, however, not constant. Some disabled asylum seekers do, at times, gain logos and become visible. Nujeen Mustafa (2016), a Syrian wheelchair user, has written a book about her experiences of migration and has spoken at numerous international events. However, without discounting the value of her contributions, the increased visibility of her experience does not appear to have significantly altered the invisibility of wider experiences.

Lack of capacity to assert needs and understanding may be combined with fear of the consequences. According to das8, the problem is that 'even though I have something that I can talk to people … we are in fear of doing campaigns though we have a lot that we can change this country'. Adoption of hegemonic discourse may be a survival strategy or a symptom of perceived impotence. According to Crehan, the maintenance of hegemonic discourse:

> does not require that those who are ruled, the subaltern, see their subjugation as justified, only that they see it as a fixed and unchangeable reality it would be futile to oppose. (2016, pp.51-52)

The capacity to consider and assert the insights of previously 'subjugated knowledge' (Bê, 2019, p.1), relies on belief in the possibility of change and therefore the value in developing alternatives. If current circumstances are perceived as 'unchangeable' then there is no purpose in devoting energy to developing alternatives.

Without the means to assert their needs and experiences, the existence of disabled asylum seekers can be ignored by policymakers, service providers and the wider population. However, to frame the problem as lack of 'logos' risks framing the problem as ignorance of people's needs, thereby obscuring the deliberate policy restrictions designed to create a 'hostile environment' (Yeo, C., 2017; Liberty, 2018; Goodfellow, 2019). For das8, there is no doubt that the restrictions imposed by government are intentional: 'they know what they are doing'. She is clear that the problem is not addressed by explaining what is happening. Her assertion is borne out by policy analysis. Disabled asylum seekers are not referred to in the 1998 White Paper, however, the disabling impact of removing access to the welfare state cannot be attributed to oversight. There were always exceptions to the 'universal' nature of human rights (United Nations, 1948), as discussed in Chapter 4. The particularly acute restrictions imposed on disabled asylum seekers simply extended and made these exceptions more explicit.

The discursive logics adopted by people with lived experience must be understood in this context.

6.2 Discursive representation of the impact of current policy and practice

As discussed in Chapter 4, policy discourse shaping the entitlements of disabled asylum seekers is focused on political logics of defence. The expressed aim is to reduce the apparent burden of migration on citizens of the nation-state. Such discourse is complemented with apparent generosity towards those people framed as worthy exceptions. Implementation of these policy distinctions draws on fatalistic assumptions, evoking pragmatic mitigation of hostility towards those assumed to be deserving. Hegemonic assumptions of distinctions of human worth and associated entitlement are thereby affirmed. Disabled asylum seekers contributing to this study described the punitive impact of deliberate restrictions to meeting human needs, a sufficientarian approach to the support available and perceptions of illogical

inequalities of entitlement. Some contributors also spoke of examples of generosity. However, the unpredictability of access to support compounds wider perceptions of a chaotic system. The discursive representations adopted by people with lived experience of policy impact are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Discursive representations of the problems asserted by people with lived experience of policy impact

Common-sense, or rarely contested, social logics	Discursive representation underpinned by the 'scream' of injustice and the assertion of common humanity. Contestation of hegemonic assumptions of distinctions of human worth.
Agenda for overt debate, or political logics	Punitive impact of restrictions and inequalities stemming from political logics of defence. Perceived absence of rationale to current policies. Focus becomes on daily survival.
Wider representation reinforced by fantasmatic logics	Hopes for the future rely on individualised quests to be perceived as an exception, worthy of support.

These representations will be considered in turn.

The 'scream' of injustice contesting the inequality of social logics

Hegemonic social logics frame the prioritisation of non-disabled citizens of the nation-state as inevitable, thereby legitimising inequalities associated with disability and forced migration. For people experiencing the direct impact of inequalities resulting from these assumptions, this is not an abstract issue. The 'scream' of injustice (Holloway, 2002, p.73) underpins the accounts of disabled asylum seekers. It is a fine balance between political energy stemming from the 'scream against oppression' (ibid) and exasperation, or resignation, regarding the relentless, apparent hopelessness of the situation. As das9 stated, 'I am so tormented here by this system, that sometimes I feel like killing myself'. This raw emotional energy of desperation is shared by some activists with lived experience of the impact of restrictions associated with disability, without intersectional issues of migration. As udc5 explained, 'it feels awful… the relentless, relentless attacks on disabled people, making increasingly coercive welfare reforms … people are fighting for existence'. Similar exasperation was shared by other people contributing to the event dmas3, which brought together disability activists. The emotional 'scream' of injustice or the resignation of despair contrasts with the discourse of contributors with wider subject positions, discussed in Chapter 5. In the words of a voluntary sector employee (Vsd2) 'it's that interesting thing of like, they're taking on board what we're saying but it's government, so it's slow'. This person in no way condones the restrictions faced by disabled asylum seekers and is committed to addressing the injustice. However, the measured and apparently pragmatic focus is distinct from the 'scream' of injustice.

Exasperation and rejection of present injustice might be expected to result in systemic contestation. However, as Holloway (2002, p.146) writes, 'we who scream are we who acquiesce'. For disabled asylum seekers, struggles for immediate

survival temper the capacity for hegemonic contestation. As explained in Chapter 3, das11 was clear that her survival depended on keeping her boat afloat and that she was, therefore, unable to devote energy to contesting causal problems or to develop alternatives. In this regard, the claim that people have 'nothing to lose but their chains' (Marx and Engels, 2009), is misleading. While people are still alive, there remains something to lose, and the more life becomes a struggle for basic survival, the less capacity there is for systemic resistance.

Denial of support for disabled citizens created the motivational anger which led to development of the social model of disability. Lived experience of injustice can result in a moment of politics. However, as Clifford (2020, p.269) argues, it cannot be assumed:

> that those at the sharp end of neoliberal ideology would play a leading role in the fightback … Space, time and resources have had to be carved out for activism on top of attempting to navigate the ever more wearing daily grind. On the other hand, the one thing disabled people are familiar with, by the very definition of being disabled, is struggle.

Clifford argues that resistance *must* be led by people with lived experience. However, notwithstanding the systemic injustices and dramatic reduction in support available to disabled citizens, these still create fewer barriers to organisation compared with those experienced by disabled asylum seekers. While disabled citizens campaign against the reduction and withholding of support associated with the introduction of Universal Credit (Ryan, 2019; Clifford, 2020), the support available to asylum seekers is equivalent to approximately 40% of this benefit, and, as discussed in Chapter 4, without entitlement to financial support for costs associated with disability. Among asylum seekers contributing to this study, the struggle for survival risks turning the potential energy of anger into the despondency of despair.

Solidarity is needed to turn the energy of the 'scream' into effective intersectional resistance. The prime barrier to effective solidarity does not appear to be the specifics of disability or migration status, but hegemonic social logics framing disabled asylum seekers as the 'other', obscuring commonalities of human need. Lack of interaction between sectors obscures the relevance of the achievements of one sector to the other. In the asylum sector, there appears to be little awareness of the social model, the UNCRPD or the disabling impact of systemic restrictions. Yet, as discussed in Chapter 4, the politics of austerity enshrined in the 2010 White Paper of welfare reform, reflect the logics of defence adopted in immigration policy to justify removal of support and services for citizens (Ryan, 2019). In both sectors, uncontested social logics prioritising economically productive, non-disabled citizens continue to frame impairment or lack of migration status as if explanation or justification for reduced access to services and support.

The impact of distinctions of entitlement is not simply a practical issue, the denigration of rights is felt at a personal level. As das8 explains, 'when you don't have [migration] status here, it's like you're a sinner…you're not recognised as human being…You are nobody'. Hegemonic denigration of people without

migration status affects formal entitlements, but also builds feelings of shame among asylum seekers themselves. As das8 continued, 'being asylum is something that you feel…people feel ashamed to say who you are'. Similarly, as explained in Chapter 3, das5 spoke of his shame at being a refugee being so great that he had not told his daughter. It is perhaps inevitable to absorb some elements of hegemonic values. Lorde (1984, p.123) asserts:

> The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations which we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us, and which knows only the oppressor's tactics and the oppressor's relationships.

Hegemonic contestation relies on having sufficient energy to think beyond individual survival and to perceive the possibility of systemic change. Such energy is hindered by the extent of despair. As das8 explained, 'You struggle on your own, and when the day comes to an end … you say thank God, the day's gone'. Expressions of despair were common to all the asylum seekers contributing to this study. The despair is compounded by the deliberately punitive nature of the asylum system.

The punitive impact of political logics of defence, sufficientarian approaches, and perceived chaos

The logics of defence on which the White Paper (1998) was based, are experienced as punitive by asylum seekers and refugees contributing to this study. The most overt experiences of punishment are attributed to the detention system. The carceral nature of prisons and immigration removal centres is similar. However, unlike prisons, there is no rehabilitative objective in detention centres. The purpose is not so much to punish detainees for having *done* something, as for *being* in the UK. This more existential objective may explain why, according to das17 (a blind man, with experience of both), detention is more punitive. Prisoners generally know the length of their sentence and could be released early for 'good behaviour'. Consequently, as das17 explained:

> in prison there's a lot of order … there is a protocol which most people follow … you know that you're gonna be released on this day, so you don't wanna mess it up.

In contrast, people in detention do not know how long they will be there but do know that they could be deported. There is a lot of anger. As das17 continued: 'people don't want to be deported… it's a very volatile environment'. In his perception, detention staff 'don't care about what you do, as long as you don't escape'. In prison, access issues were considered by officers, but in detention, he relied on getting help from other detainees. Implementation of logics of defence has punitive impact. Furthermore, when the ability to meet human needs becomes dependent on discretionary acts of generosity, there is little scope to contest provision. The precarity experienced by disabled asylum seekers is thereby reinforced.

The punitive impact of detention was perceived by das17 as irrational. He recalled being taken from detention to a medical appointment:

> you'll be in handcuffs while the doctor... they've got a longer chain … one of the sides of the chain is on you, one is on the officer, one of the officers. And for

> someone like me, really, I was relying on them to get to wherever I was going …There was no way that I would escape from them when I'm …relying on them.

The use of chains is symbolic of the disregard for an individual's well-being, but the impotence experienced by das17 is real and systemic. Like the physical display of power at border crossings (Andersson, 2014), chains highlight the power differential, overtly asserting control, as called for in the 1998 White Paper.

Provision for disabled asylum seekers appears characterised by logics of relentless punishment with little semblance of rights-based support. When he was released from detention, das17 was taken by taxi to unsupported accommodation in a city where he knew no-one. He was left on a street corner:

> I had stayed without eating for a long time and I was on medication, I was beginning to be sick, I was feeling dizzy. So, in the end, I had to go in an ambulance to hospital on the very day that I arrived.

Eventually, it was agreed that he could stay with his partner. He continued to have to attend an Immigration Reporting Centre. However, there was no provision to address access barriers: 'no one was organised for me to be escorted there'. He relied on his partner accompanying him at her own cost of £150 each time. In addition, he had to wear an electronic tag with a curfew between 8 pm and 8 am. Yet, as he explained, he was unable to leave the house:

> I've stayed two weeks without going outside… I can't abscond anyway… They used to call me … they said, "Okay, we're just checking because we're worried that something has happened to you, because we can see that you haven't gone out".

This apparent concern for his well-being, masks the punitive purpose of the tag. It is not imposed to ensure his safety but as a visible symbol of control. According to Nesrine Malik (2018), herself a former immigration detainee, the immigration system is based on 'arbitrary cruelty', with an 'ever-shifting obstacle course with hidden trapdoors'. Contributors to this study provided relentless examples of such 'trapdoors', or the punitive impact of policy and practice.

The assertion of power and control over asylum seekers has increased significantly in recent years, with particular restrictions on access to healthcare (Bhatia, R. and Wallace, 2007; Stevens, 2010). The punitive impact of these restrictions was highlighted by das8 when her medical operation was cancelled. She recalled being in hospital waiting for surgery:

> they gave me gown, they gave me stockings ... when I was almost to go to theatre, there was a lady who came and say she want to see my papers … I don't know whether they were working with the Home Office.

She was informed that her asylum claim had been refused. As stipulated by the Immigration Act (2016) her eligibility for secondary healthcare was therefore removed. According to her, the doctor was unhappy with implementing these restrictions, he 'came out and he said there is something that is going wrong somewhere, but he doesn't care. He will do the operation if there is time'. However, his attempt to overcome systemic punishment with an individual act of generosity

was unsuccessful. He was obliged to prioritise other patients, ran out of time and the operation was cancelled.

Lack of medical intervention may cause impairments, exacerbate existing conditions, and as illustrated in Figure 3, is inherently disabling. One person with haemophilia (das15) was detained on arrival in Britain. He was denied medication until after several days of bleeding. He was then transferred to hospital in chains. Intervention from the Haemophilia Association was needed to persuade immigration authorities to remove the chains. However, his asylum claim was refused, therefore even after release from detention, he remained eligible only for emergency treatment of uncontrolled bleeding, but not for secondary healthcare such as the medication to prevent bleeding occurring. Medical professionals become the implementors of such apparently irrationally punitive logics of defence and the dislocation of rights. Doctors provide das15 with the medication his life may depend on, but he is billed for it. Without income, the bills are unpayable, therefore das15 spoke of reliance on voluntary sector advocates to contest the mounting debt. Acts of discretionary generosity may enable das15 to access lifesaving medication, however, he then becomes beholden to the provider. This approach reinforces, rather than contests, systemic inequalities, and the dislocation of rights.

The punitive impact of hegemonic logics of defence is further asserted through restricted provision of housing. Homelessness may be framed as the result of policy failures in the wider population, however, for people whose asylum claim is refused, destitution is a tool of overt policy, designed to punish people for being in the country (Crawley, Hemmings and Price, 2011). In this context, expectations become so low that any form of accommodation becomes framed as better than nothing, with access considerations becoming beyond reasonable expectations. Das8 recalled her social worker explaining that:

> due to my status of asylum seeker … The only thing they can do, they can help me with that walking frame and like that seat … If I get the status, I can go back to them.

Meanwhile, she is unable to access her shower or bath. Such inadequate accessible accommodation not only affects asylum seekers (Ahmed, 2013). An EHRC (2018) report on housing for disabled people, found people waiting over two years for accessible accommodation. Barriers accessing local authority housing and social care are exacerbated by lack of stability in the location of asylum seekers. One wheelchair user (das11) described spending months negotiating with one local authority. Then a few days before her care package was due to start, she was told she would be dispersed to a different area. She recalled local authority staff saying: ‘that’s very unfortunate because … we have to refer your case to somebody else’. Being forced to move from one area to another is counter to the ‘choice and control’ proposed for citizens in the 2006 White Paper. Furthermore, provision for asylum seekers does not allow for the general principles of the UNCRPD, such as the ‘full and effective participation and inclusion in society’ (United Nations, 2006). Instead, punitive policies of destitution, detention and deportation systematically exclude asylum seekers. The punitive impact of such policies is reinforced by support being reduced to the sufficientarian minimum required to prevent immediate death.

Sufficientarian approach underpinning minimal entitlement to support

A sufficientarian approach to provision of support reduces people's lives to a struggle for survival. Financial support provided to asylum seekers with ongoing claims is not designed to meet the costs of public health recommendations or to achieve any level of parity with the wider community, but to provide for minimal survival needs 'like food, clothing and toiletries' (Great Britain. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), 2020). An unsuccessful legal challenge at the low levels of support (EWHC, 2014) was lodged by Refugee Action (2014). The charity argued that asylum support was insufficient to meet 'essential living needs'. If people's asylum claims are refused, all support may be removed.

Lack of financial support reduces people's lives to the relentless quest for survival. People contributing to this study described struggles to meet basic human needs, with little or no financial support (das3,8,9,11,13,17). Das11 explained that she cannot afford fresh food:

> eating healthy is something for people who are already settled in their lives. Then they can think about something else. … somebody who is not settled, they need a sugar rush … for £2 that I would buy strawberries I know it's healthy but if I buy bread or if I buy biscuits that will make me fuller for longer.

Her expressed need for a 'sugar rush' was not purely a financial issue. She recalled a local organisation seeking to support healthy eating by providing volunteers with fresh fruit rather than cheaper biscuits. However, as das11 explained, her food choices stem from immediate needs for energy and satisfaction, rather than future well-being. Similarly, research by Oli Williams (2017) highlights that obesity is not exclusively the result of lack of access to healthy food. In the context of wider public health recommendations, these food choices might be criticised. However, wider service provision also appears focused on immediate energy needs. In an initial accommodation centre, according to das8, the 'food is only one diet. Chips, chips, chips and … it's only chips and this bread that you eat'. Such food would be unacceptable for school dinners (Warin, 2011). The influence of celebrity chef Jamie Oliver has resulted in hegemonic acceptance in the UK that as Griffiths and Hunter (2007, p.124) argue: 'children do better at school if they eat well; patients do better in hospital if they eat well'. However, service provision for asylum seekers appears designed not for people to 'do better', but to be sufficient to prevent immediate death.

A sufficientarian approach to the needs of asylum seekers ignores psychological needs for intimacy, belonging or fulfilment. Yet, these needs were emphasised by many contributors to this study. At a meeting designed to build a broader disability movement (dmas3), one disabled asylum seeker (das4) spoke of the acute pain caused by separation from loved ones, combined with language barriers and lack of opportunities to build new social and emotional connections. The relative importance of human needs is more fluid and interconnected than presented by Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of motivation. The intensity of emotional pain described by das4 is beyond her quest to meet physiological needs. When she recalled having

had only a single potato in the house, her anger at the injustice and the anguish of loneliness were combined with, rather than secondary to, the recollection of physical hunger. If she were with her family, they would have greater ability to access food, and the loneliness, together with large elements of the anger would be reduced. Physiological and psychological needs cannot be separated.

A sufficientarian approach to support does not encourage social interaction or peer support with the wider population. Asylum seekers taking part in a focus group (das18) were regularly attending other meetings in the same venue as a disabled people's organisation but were unaware of its existence. One participant explained:

> nobody has told us anything about it. And also, we can be told about it and you go there, and you feel you are not fit to be there… you feel you are out of place.

Meeting with strangers can be particularly daunting if there are language barriers, if a welcome is uncertain or if, as for das7 and 14, emotional distress impedes group interaction.

The impact of barriers meeting psychological needs for social connections is particularly punitive for people who have been through traumatic experiences and are away from family and friends (as described by das1,2,4,5,6,7,8). The existence of psychological needs is sometimes acknowledged, if not addressed, by the Home Office. When her asylum claim was refused, das8 received a letter from the Home Office advising her that if this news was upsetting then she should speak to a friend or to the Samaritans. This professed concern for her well-being is similar to that offered to das17 when his electronic tag had not registered movement. As das8 put it, the Home Office 'pretend they are doing good things, but they want to destroy your soul and your body'. The punitive impact of restrictions meeting human needs cannot be overcome by talking to someone about the emotional impact.

When people seeking asylum are granted refugee status, the punitive impact of sufficientarianism continues. People may then bring family members to join them in Britain, but this does not entitle them to larger accommodation. Both das1 and 5 described having to choose which of their children would join them in their 1-bedroom apartments. Both families now experience similar problems sharing their bedrooms with their adult disabled son and daughter. In accordance with sufficientarian principles, there is no immediate risk to life, but such lack of privacy is not conducive to the principles of the UNCRPD (2016), including Article 23, the respect for home and family life.

Barriers to peer support and effective organisation are not caused solely by migration status. In comparison with asylum seekers, a refugee selected for the VPRS (das10) has greater entitlement to financial support, housing, and the 'right to work'. However, as this person explained: 'since I arrived in the UK… there was no chance for me to meet other people with disability, I didn't have that chance'. The result is lack of awareness of commonalities with other disabled people, irrespective of migration status. For some people, the lack of peer support and solidarity compounds the isolation. Das8 complained: 'we are here fighting for

yourself on your own … Nobody is concerned with your life. Nobody'. Without regular contact with other disabled people, it is hard to consider the causes of current restrictions or to build alternatives.

With or without other disabled people, peer support reduces the punitive impact of isolation. A drop-in centre organised by an asylum support organisation provides important functions. As das7 explained:

> when I come here, I don't feel scared. I see people laughing, I see people smiling, I see people talking to each other. I see people helping other people, so it's nice and this makes me happy. I'm not scared here.

Similarly, das4 described her reliance on these spaces for social contact. Without assistance to get out of her flat, she explained that some weeks, the only human contact she had was her carer for seven hours per week. During a focus group (das18), it emerged that she and das8 were unaware that they lived in the same building. Even if they were to meet, social contact would be hindered without interpreters. Yet a sufficientarian approach fails to provide for such human needs.

The impact of apparently irrational decision-making

The punitive impact of the asylum system is exacerbated by perceived absence of rationale. The lack of clearly discernible rights hinders the ability to make plans. This increases the perceived hopelessness and compounds the punitive impact. Among asylum seekers, contributing to this study, there was a ubiquitous sense that the system is illogical. This stems in part from differences in individual experiences: one refused asylum seeker experiencing mental distress (das7) received a bus pass, while another, with a mobility impairment (das8), did not; one person who uses mobility aids (das4) received social care, while another (das2) did not; or that some asylum claims are accepted (das1,2,5,6), while others are refused. The impact of such apparent irrationality is itself experienced as punitive. Das8 spoke of other people in her accommodation getting migration status, while she remained waiting:

> they were taken out and I was left and it's a terrible thing, and some other people were being brought. Then they were also given…they left me… going, coming, going, coming … it has been terrible.

The lack of predictability led das8 to speculate:

> the Home office they … don't consider you as a human being because you are not young. You do not benefit anything to the country.

In a focus group discussion (das18), a young man pointed out that his claim had also been rejected. An older woman responded that, for him, the problem is that 'they know that you are not well, you'll be a burden to the nation'. Such speculation as to the cause of asylum decisions appears to be an attempt to make sense out of apparent chaos. Without clear entitlements, people do not know what to expect, whether there is any hope or even where to get reliable advice. There may, or may not, be rational explanations for different experiences. However, perceptions of the system as chaotic shape understanding of the current situation and limit the scope for contestation.

A combination of punitive and irrational approaches is perceived to extend to the wider asylum and immigration system. Having informed staff of an important medical appointment, das17 recalled a Kafkaesque explanation as to why he could not attend:

> the officers told me, "Because we knew about the appointment date … you might have some people attack us on the way to hospital". I said, "Ok, if it was like that, then why didn't you change it? … I had to tell you about the appointment so that you would know and organise people to take me there. So, if I didn't tell you, you were going to say, you're not going because you didn't tell us".

The perceived irrationality of their response compounded his sense of injustice. As he put it, 'what reason, they don't even know'. The immigration system appears based on irrational punishment, with disdain for the individual impact. Similarly, das8, believed there is no rationale as to when or whether someone is detained:

> they took me to the detention six weeks, and after that, I'm out. Why was I in detention? … Now since 2013, I'm here. They never talk about again … we don't know how the Home Office work. We don't know…

Similarly, an older woman (das4), without family or friends in the UK, was moved three times between cities. Her carer explained:

> Three times …they bring her here and they send her back, bring her here… She doesn't know why. She went and they send her back … she was crying … cry a lot.

Das4 recounted feeling lost, without friends, contacts, or even a language in which to find out what was happening. She recalled arriving in a new city, without money, people to help her, or mobility aids to enable her to go out. The absence of support prevented her from meeting basic physical needs, compounding her sense of desperation and mental distress. Such denial of support does not promote logics of defence, generosity, or even sufficientarianism. Instead, it appears motivated by irrationally punitive lack of consideration for the well-being of people classed as the 'other'.

Sometimes, the perceptions of an irrational, chaotic system may be due to lack of information as to what is happening and what to expect. One woman (das8) explained that she had left her country of origin in a rush. She had not known where she was going, only that she had to escape. As she put it, she 'didn't know the asylum I was seeking, what was it'. She recalled her confusion after arriving in the UK and being told to go to East Croydon:

> Nobody's taking you … after you reach London you find your way. It was not easy but… I went to Croydon and I seek asylum there. Yeah. …. After you seek asylum there, they take your fingerprints and everything, and they interview you … I finish with them around nine at night, and … people were being sent somewhere, somewhere… after a week we were given a letter that we are going to Wales.

After a month in Cardiff, she was taken to Bristol. She was given little notice and no choice regarding where to go or when. Again, this absence of clear policy rationale

and the apparent disregard for people's well-being compounds the sense of desperation and mental distress.

The apparently chaotic manner of decision-making and support provision extends beyond the Home Office. Das4 met a carer who was visiting her neighbour. This carer referred her to Social Services, who eventually found her eligible for social care. The barriers that she had faced accessing social care may in part be attributed to lack of English and poor understanding of the system. However, an assertive, English-speaking, wheelchair user (das11), with clearly visible access needs, described the chaos she had to navigate to get her needs met:

> they were fighting amongst themselves, these Social Services Departments … I was shouting and screaming … I need help. Who is the right person that I should go to? …They were like, "I'm not the one. I don't know who that one is".

Nonsensical barriers to accessing support can themselves be disabling. Threatened eviction from social services supported accommodation caused das3 immense anxiety. As outlined in the introduction, he lamented:

> it makes no sense. They are not listening… without a roof I'm going to be crazy, they push you to be crazy man… They want me to become dirty, nasty, and crazy and taking drugs … and only then they help me?

Inadequate advice services and unclear entitlements impede people's ability to contest decisions.

The perceived illogical basis of policy may, however, result from misunderstanding. If the purpose of immigration policy is not to provide for people's needs but to create such hostility as to encourage people to leave, then a sufficientarian, or apparently chaotic and punitive denial of basic needs, may be inhumane but entirely rational.

Reliance on apparently discretionary acts of generosity towards people who are framed as exceptions.

Perceptions of hostility, sufficientarianism and chaos reinforce perceptions of the system as punitive. Hegemonic dislocation of rights results in support being framed as discretionary acts of apparent generosity. One person (das12) who was trafficked into slavery in the UK described how, after escaping, her claim for asylum was refused and formal support was denied. Rather than foregrounding her suffering, or the denial of rights, she expressed gratitude for the support received from the church and voluntary sector. In her view, in 'this country they look after people'. Her apparent lack of expectation of rights, reflects hegemonic discourse of generosity to those perceived as worthy, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Sources of support are different for different people. When her asylum support was stopped, das8 referred to relying on 'our people'. She seemed surprised that I was unsure who this meant, 'you know, our *community* people'. I asked if she meant people from a voluntary sector organisation. The response was, 'No, no, no. Our *community'*. To her it was obvious that her community is composed of fellow nationals. The people to whom someone turns in crisis can reveal where the trust

and identification lies, rather than who has the material resources (Niven, 2013). I had under-estimated the significance of solidarity from fellow nationals and assumed exaggerated significance in the role of the voluntary sector. This highlights the pervasive and unconscious nature of cultural hegemony. The voluntary sector has the resources and motivation to publicise their role, whereas the solidarity of friends is unmeasured. Das8 recalled sharing a bedroom with the children of a fellow national for more than a year when she would otherwise have been homeless. Only when her symptoms of mental distress increased, did her friends push for statutory support. The role of unpaid solidarity is clearly crucial to survival and potential resistance.

A discretionary approach to service provision is not exclusively applied to disabled asylum seekers. Building on the discussion in Chapter 1, the hierarchy in provision of services, described by Mhairi Mackenzie et al. (2015), affects a wider population. Without enforceable rights, people rely more exclusively on informal support from friends, religious groups, fellow nationals, or voluntary organisations. In this context, chance encounters may have life-changing impact. Das1 recalled asking a stranger for directions. That person then helped him find a doctor and support for his disabled wife. A chance encounter with a pastor introduced das2 to a church community which became her prime support network. She described them as 'like to see my family. When I see them, I forget everything. Their kindness is from their hearts'. However, support which relies on voluntary acts of generosity is inherently unequal and precarious. One person (das8) spoke of her frustration that sometimes her travel costs are refunded by an asylum support organisation, but sometimes they are not. She explained, 'You have to ask for it … and you get upset'. This uncertainty and need to ask creates perceptions of generosity, with the recipient beholden to the donor. If people have friends or family in better circumstances, they may borrow money, but as das8 and das11 explained, this creates an imbalance in friendships. This inequality is amplified by differences in individual dispositions. People who are extrovert or have cheerful dispositions may have greater social contacts and consequently have their needs met more readily. In contrast, people who are depressed or angry may have the most urgent needs but, as argued by Mackenzie et al. (2015), they may find it harder to access discretionary support.

If support is determined, or perceived to be determined, by discretionary decisions, rather than rights, then performed appreciation becomes necessary. This 'gratitude imperative' (Schwartz, 1967, p.1) may explain why das2 constantly expressed thanks:

> Good GP, good … good and church. xx people very good, very help and thank you very much, people. And you and xx, thank you very much.

On overhearing this, das8 commented to me, 'you have to understand she is not ok'. Whether or not das2 is less 'ok' than anyone else, successfully navigating the asylum system may depend on endorsing logics of generosity. This is not unique to Britain. In the Finnish film 'The other side of hope', a newly arrived asylum seeker asks for advice from someone who has been there longer, 'should I pretend and smile too?'. He is advised, 'Yes, it will help. Just don't smile in the street, they'll

think you're crazy' (Kaurismäki, 2017). If support is perceived as discretionary, then beneficiaries must respond as they would to a bearer of gifts. Expressions of gratitude and appreciation may be endearing, while anger and frustration may alienate potential support.

Perceptions of generosity may also shape the actions of asylum seekers towards voluntary sector organisations. Some people spoke of resentment when their perceived generosity towards these organisations is not reciprocated. According to das8:

> We keep on telling our stories …sometimes we don't benefit, it's the charity that benefits … I tell people about our problem, you write a cheque and send to the charity …sometimes you are tired of doing things because if you keep on doing things and nothing is changing in your life, why should you continue?

If people perceive themselves as giving their time and energy to an organisation, then appreciation is to be expected. Gifts, of whatever form, are discretionary and require gratitude.

When the focus is on survival, supporting a charitable organisation is an indicator of a person's worth. However, such support is futile if unacknowledged. Similarly, campaigning for rights is only worthwhile if the right people are listening. At an event bringing together disabled people (dmas3) irrespective of migration status, to share experiences and build a stronger movement, asylum seekers spoke of it being pointless without the presence of powerful decision-makers. Das4 asked, how a stronger movement could help her find out if her son is dead or alive? or how a stronger movement could get her identity documents back from the Home Office. Similarly, das5 asked whether a stronger movement would stop him and his wife having to share a bedroom with their adult daughter. Irrespective of whether a stronger movement could potentially facilitate such changes, the perceived solution to problems was firmly focused on individual pleading with decision-makers, or with the 'giants' (das8), rather than building a movement for systemic change.

Notwithstanding the misgivings of disabled asylum seekers, critical moments of change have occurred through collective determination based on the solidarity of organised action. As outlined in Chapter 4, the social model of disability can be considered a moment of politics. As Rancière explains:

> politics exists wherever the count of parts and parties of society is disturbed by the inscription of the part of those who have no part. It begins when the equality of anyone and everyone is inscribed in the liberty of the people. (1999, p.123)

In the context of current experiences of disability and forced migration, collective organisation and political change may be hampered by the urgency of survival needs. To reiterate the perspective of das11, longer-term battles for systemic change cannot be the focus when immediate survival is at stake. Nonetheless, as argued in Chapters 4 and 5, logics of generosity reinforce, rather than challenge, wider logics of defence or punishment.

6.3 Inequalities of access resulting from distinctions of entitlement

The combined impact of systematic restrictions and discretionary framing of support gives rise to relentless struggles for survival. It would, however, be wrong to suggest that all disabled people seeking asylum encounter similar barriers. Some people's needs are met more adequately than others. These inequalities are not always described by asylum seekers in a negative manner. As explained above, das12 perceived any support as acts of generosity, ascribing this to her being 'respectful, works hard, brave'. According to her, asylum seekers 'find it hard to get needs met if lazy' and that 'through attitude, people come and help'. This echoes hegemonic neoliberal logics of individual responsibility and the biopsychosocial model (Waddell and Aylward, 2009) referenced in Chapter 4. This discursive framing is unusual among contributors with lived experience in this study. However, the lack of clear, rights-based entitlement encourages speculation as to the basis of inequalities. Research by Gill et al. (2015, p.52) found that 'factors such as the gender of the judge and of the appellant, and where the appellant lives, are influencing asylum appeal adjudication'. This raises criticisms of a 'postcode lottery' as stated by lp1 and discussed in Chapter 5. The organisation of resistance is hindered if individual survival relies on apparently arbitrary and discretionary decision making.

Policy discourse frames asylum support as dependent on whether an individual is considered deserving, rather than on whether the person needs support. Categories of apparent worth are not exclusive to disabled migrants. Nandita Sharma (2005, p.93) criticises the approach of campaigners who present some women as victims of trafficking, in the quest to 'transform them into extraordinary innocent beings' in contrast to unvictimized, and therefore unworthy, 'illegal migrants'. Such campaigns reinforce notions that some humans are deserving, and others are not, while leaving the causes of injustice uncontested.

Lack of clarity in categorisations of entitlement and Home Office decision-making, leads to wariness among disabled asylum seekers. After taking high profile roles in public campaigns, Das8 recalled receiving negative decisions from the Home Office. In her perception, resistance is dangerous. In contrast, das11 believed that her role in public campaigns protected her. Lack of transparency makes it difficult to know who is correct. Das11 recalled that on the day when she was due to be evicted, a protest was arranged with disabled citizens, asylum seekers and local media. She recalled:

> there were people outside with placards. It was a big thing on the news … That's when I got a call from the Home Office that I should go to xx and fill out the section 4 form … I said, "But I went yesterday, they refused me".

The Home Office contacted the charity that had refused to help das11 and called for her to be supported. As she put it, 'imagine that!'. She was clear that the media publicity was influential in her support being reinstated. According to her, service providers feared that she could instigate another public campaign and, therefore, became more attentive to her needs: 'I'm in an organisation and I have support and

it can go on the media'. She recounted several further occasions when she believed that her agency resulted in preferential treatment. For example, unlike other asylum seekers, she was shown possible accommodation and asked if it was appropriate. As a wheelchair user, her agency in this context stemmed from the vulnerability associated with the threat of being made street homeless. As Butler (2015a) argues in a lecture, vulnerability may be a mobilising force for resistance, 'The very meaning of vulnerability changes when it becomes understood as part of the practice of political resistance'. In the absence of clear criteria for decision-making, we can only speculate. It may be that both das8 and das11 are correct in their analyses. Butler (2015a) describes the 'mobilisation of vulnerability' as being 'exposed and agentic at the same time'. What das11 perceived as relative advantage may also stem from her social capital. As a university-educated English speaker, she had good understanding of how the system works. Unlike das4, she had no false expectation that asylum decisions take place in public meetings and therefore understood how to assert influence.

Evidence from this study highlights inherent inequalities in people's capacity to use publicity to address the problems experienced. It may be easier for a person with a mobility impairment (das11) than for a person experiencing mental distress such as das7. The experiences described by das11 contrast with those outlined by Imogen Tyler (2013, p.68) in which Tyler cites a person wanting 'to become invisible' to avoid deportation: 'the longer nobody comes, I keep thinking, it is possible they have forgotten about me and I can stay and have a normal life'. The quest for invisibility as a route to safety contrasts with Rancière's (1999) account of logos as a means of agency. There may be times when visibility is important and other times when it is beneficial to remain hidden. Attempts to gain publicity to halt the deportation of das17 were unsuccessful. Two generally sympathetic journalists were reluctant to get involved after learning of his conviction for rape. Drawing on distinctions made by Anderson (2013, p.7), he can neither be considered a 'Good Citizen' nor a 'Failed Citizen' but a failed non-citizen, the epitome of worthlessness. As Anderson explains:

> The claim that immigrants are not illegal on the grounds that they are not criminals … implicitly claims that the migrant belongs in the community of value, in contrast to the criminal who does not. (2013, p.118)

When distinctions of assumed human worth are hegemonically assumed to depend not on rights, but on defence counterposed with generosity, then indefensible wrong-doing such as rape must be hidden if wider needs are to be met. To assert the rights of a criminal becomes counter-hegemonic, irrespective of the injustices imposed. Access to support becomes dependent on judgements of human worth rather than rights or need.

Distinctions in lived experiences might be assumed to depend on the form of a person's impairment. However, response to migration status may be a bigger contributor to inequalities of entitlement. Two men with visual impairments, but differences in migration status, recounted distinct experiences. A blind person (das10) with refugee status, selected for the VPRS, described problems finding his

way. He explained that language barriers hindered his ability to ask for help, but attributed lack of support to oversights, explaining that in Britain, as in his country of origin, people 'try to help anyone with visual impairment'. As illustrated in Figure 3, lack of services and support is disabling, irrespective of whether restrictions stem from oversight or deliberate policy. However, restrictions stemming from oversight are more easily addressed than those that are deliberate. The experiences of everyone trying to help (das10) could not be more different from those of das17, also with visual impairment, but with a criminal record and without refugee status. He described the lack of adjustments made to meet his access needs in detention. Worse still, he recounted that Home Office staff denied that he could be blind. One official asked him, 'How come you're looking at me? How come you're blinking?'. The deliberate hostility directed at a person with a criminal record in the immigration system is not reserved for disabled people. Discursive analysis by Bowling and Westenra (2018) concludes that migrants with criminal records are hegemonically represented as 'folk devils'. Das17 attempted to contest the denial of his human needs, by asserting the vulnerability associated with blindness. It was essential to use all means possible to resist the injustice of the life-threatening deportation which he faced. However, if wider contestation of injustice is based on asserting individual examples of worth based on exceptional status, rather than on equal rights or common humanity, then hegemonic distinctions of entitlement are reinforced.

During my doctoral research, I spent six months working with disabled asylum seekers in Berlin (2017b). According to Eurostat (2018) figures, in 2016, at the peak of recent migration to Germany, there were 722,265 new applications compared with 39,240 to the UK. Despite the hugely greater numbers of asylum seekers in Germany, the inequalities of support appear broadly similar to those in the UK. For example, a Syrian family with a small child with physical impairments described large levels of informal support. Most of the family's support is provided through the kindness, or discretionary generosity, of neighbours rather than through statutory rights. Such reliance on discretionary support regarding needs associated with disability and migration result in contrasting experiences of a middle-aged blind man, also from Syria. He was living in a small flat with little support. His sister recalled how in Syria he had been able to go out and visit people, whereas in Germany he had little social contact and consequently was experiencing great mental distress. This is not dissimilar to the experiences of das10 selected for the VPRS in the UK, who spoke of having his formal needs met, but having inadequate support to go out, and therefore struggling psychologically.

The lived experiences of people contributing to this study highlight that being disabled is not exclusively associated with reduced entitlement in the UK asylum system. When a person's asylum claim is refused, housing and financial support are also removed, unless a person can prove that they are unable to return to the country of origin. People receiving housing and financial assistance from Social Services may have greater leverage in maintaining some support if they get a Human Rights assessment. Several people involved in this study (das 3,8,9,11,13) continued receiving support from Social Services after their asylum claims were refused. However, all these people faced the precarity of not knowing whether

support would be removed. Furthermore, the standard of provision is based on preventing infringement of human rights rather than on logics of equality.

The capacity to mobilise resistance may depend, in part, on the form of a person's impairment. It may be particularly difficult to get the energy, confidence and social capital necessary to gather support if a person is also experiencing mental distress or chronic illness. The struggles faced by das13 and das3 (both experiencing mental distress) while resisting eviction are not inherently different from those faced by das11 (a wheelchair user). To organise effective resistance, as das11 explained in a public meeting (dmas1), you have to overcome the feeling that:

> you are fighting for something you don't deserve. You have to feel it should not be like that. Then you can make a difference.

The barriers faced by wheelchair users may be more visible, overt, and perhaps more easily challenged than those faced by someone experiencing mental distress.

Further inequalities of support may stem from the response to the cause, rather than the nature of an impairment, as discussed in Chapter 5. One asylum seeker (das16) showed me photographs of his torture scars which he had ready for his solicitor. I observed in my journal at the time that 'his scars seem to be core to the asylum claim because they prove his suffering'. Yet the scars do not prove his *need*, only the *origin* of the need. Furthermore, as Udit Bhatia (2019) argues, there is a responsibility not to obscure people's needs, even if those needs do not meet the criteria of the 1951 Convention.

In combination with distinctions of entitlement, there are distinctions in the value ascribed to human life. Writing with regard to the wider population, Butler (2015a) refers to distinctions as to whose lives are 'grievable'. The injustices experienced by people without logos need to become exceptional to impact on public discourse. The struggles faced by Kamil Ahmad were not acknowledged in media discourse when his asylum claim was refused, when he had no formal support and when he was experiencing severe mental distress. At that time, like many of those contributing to this study, his life was a struggle for survival. Such suffering is attributed to systematic policy restrictions, which are largely unacknowledged or are framed as if inevitable in public discourse. If he had died unsupported on the street, like the estimated 726 homeless people who died in 2018 (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2019), his life would not have been publicly grievable. There has not been media coverage and public outrage at each of these deaths. It was only when the overt and obscene violence of his murder became the focus of public attention that his life became framed as 'grievable' in public discourse. The blame could then be attributed to an act of villainy rather than to systematic state-sanctioned denial of support.

The potential political impact of denial of rights is contentious. Arendt (1951) argues that refugees like herself have lost everything (1943), including the 'right to have rights', which according to her is synonymous with losing political agency. However, according to Rancière (1999), it is when those without a part assert their part that a

transformative moment of politics can occur. As he explains, the premise that 'some people command and others obey' underpins 'the sheer contingency of any social order' (1999, p.16). Maintenance of the social order relies on people understanding and accepting their roles: to command or to obey. Disabled people in the asylum system are clearly in the category of those who must obey, and who are rarely considered in political discourse. However, the problem is not that people fail to speak. The problem is that the existing social order relies on one speech being 'understood as discourse and another as noise' (Rancière, 1999, p.29). This capacity for those without rights to assert political change relies on breaking 'the tangible configuration' (ibid). Such a moment of politics may necessitate asserting the logos of disabled asylum seekers, but it also involves contesting the systemic causes in alliance with other oppressed people. If the current system is contingent, then alternatives must be possible.

6.4 Responsibility for disabling impact

The impact of current restrictions on disabled asylum seekers and refugees highlights the disabling impact of the asylum system. The deliberately punitive nature of restrictions designed to create a 'hostile environment' (Yeo, C., 2017; Liberty, 2018; Goodfellow, 2019) may go beyond the exclusion described by scholars of disability studies (Oliver, 1983; Morris, 1991; Barnes and Mercer, 2003; Swain et al., 2013; Shakespeare, 2017). No contributor to this study condoned the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration, yet not only do such policies continue, but they have been extended to a wider population, in the form of benefit sanctions, public service cuts and wider welfare reform (Adler, 2018; Ryan, 2019; Clifford, 2020). However, ongoing restrictions and inequalities are socially and politically constructed, rather than inevitable. It is, therefore, necessary to analyse the administration of such injustices.

The administration of injustice

The restrictions and inequalities of the asylum system result from deliberate policy, but this does not mean that those implementing policy are necessarily motivated by malicious intent. People responsible for policy implementation may perceive themselves as impotent, neutral, or even as pragmatically doing their bit to mitigate the impact of an inherently unjust system. However, their motivation is irrelevant to the impact. Without effective contestation, hegemonic distinctions of entitlement continue. As discussed in Chapter 1, when observing the lack of remorse shown by Eichmann for his role in Nazi atrocities, Arendt (1964) referred to the 'banality of evil', concluding that he perceived his role as administrative rather than malicious. Responding to Arendt's analysis, Richard Bernstein (2000, p.220) argues that Eichmann, 'was motivated by the most mundane and petty considerations of advancing his career, pleasing his superiors, demonstrating that he could do his job well'. At the Eichmann trial, Arendt made a distinction between the doer and the deed: 'the deeds were monstrous, but the doer - at least the very effective one now on trial – was quite ordinary, commonplace, and neither demonic nor monstrous' (Arendt and Kroh, 1964, p.4). Phil Cole elaborates on Arendt's argument:

> what is most terrifying and indescribable about these people is not that they are monsters, but that they are human… one aspect of the banality of evil is that those who perform it are staggeringly, disturbingly normal. (2006, p.199)

He goes on to relate Arendt's work to the UK asylum system, warning that to make the humanity of certain people superfluous and 'to demonise others is to fail to learn the lessons of history' (2006, pp.208-209). Without exaggerating the parallels between Nazi atrocities and the implementation of current immigration or welfare reform policy, Arendt's observations bring useful insights. The Shaw Report (2016) highlights the harmful effects of the UK detention system, yet it calls, not for the ending of detention, but for 'vulnerable persons' to be spared the worst effects. This is, of course, a different magnitude, however, in principle, it is not unlike Eichmann's efforts to reduce numbers of people in railway carriages. The focus is on being somewhat less bad, rather than contesting systemic injustice.

The asylum system is composed of many ostensibly banal acts, in addition to the more overtly violent acts associated with detention or deportation, for example. It was a hospital administrator who checked the migration status of das8, resulting in her operation being denied, exacerbating her physical and psychological pain, and preventing her from getting to a food bank or asylum support organisation. The administrator was carrying out a banal task without overt violence and quite probably without malicious intent. The impact of the restrictions faced by asylum seekers (particularly those whose asylum claims have been refused) is not altered by the routine nature of their implementation. However, the banality of these tasks shapes hegemonic perceptions of common-sense, or the uncontested social logics underpinning systemic inequalities.

Together, these acts create a system in which hostility and deprivation of basic needs are routine. If the restrictions were the result of oversights, they could have been rectified when brought to wider attention (Harris and Roberts, 2001). Instead, my research has found that the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and forced migration result from uncontested and hegemonic discursive representations of a problem, in which non-disabled, economically productive, citizens are framed as the norm to be prioritised, while 'others' are framed as problematic. Political contestation thereby becomes limited to adjusting the entitlements of the 'other' and highlighting varying degrees of 'their' apparent threat or 'our' generosity. People with diverse subject positions contributing to this study failed to contest this discursive framing, instead seeking pragmatic mitigation of the consequences. The restrictions experienced by disabled asylum seekers are not an oversight, but the inevitable consequence of such discursive framing. The appearance of banal bureaucratic decision-making, according to Cole (2006, p.200), 'enabled Eichmann to make decisions about the fate of millions, and yet be at a distance from their fate'. If the suffering experienced by disabled asylum seekers is caused by human actions, then, however mundane, and apparently innocent each person may perceive their role, the result is to administer injustice.

Despite the deliberate nature of immigration policy and service provision, no contributor to this research portrayed themselves as to blame for the injustices

experienced by disabled asylum seekers, other than as the result of possible oversight. Interviewees in each sector did, however, blame those in other sectors, with the implication that if 'they' are the problem, then 'we' are not. Variations of such representation of the problem are perhaps universal, and a means of facilitating Lacanian enjoyment: 'we' could be complete if only 'they' were different. As Cole (2006, p.6) writes, an 'attraction of the idea of evil is that it can fill that hole'. In a similar manner to Schinkel's (2013) rejection of integration as a solution, labels of evil locate the problem elsewhere, leaving systemic injustice uncontested and allowing 'us' to be relieved of guilt. The notion of evil, whether banal or otherwise, therefore facilitates avoidance of systemic analysis. As has been explained, no contributor to this study condoned current inequalities, therefore the problem cannot be attributed to individual malicious intent.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed how hegemonic representations of the needs and entitlements associated with disability and forced migration are reflected, reinforced, or contested by people with lived experience of the impact of existing policy and practice. Disabled asylum seekers described the impact of what are perceived as irrationally punitive policies restricting access to services to a level sufficient only to impede immediate death. Such restrictions meeting basic human needs result in struggles for survival mitigated only by instances of apparent generosity towards individuals framed as exceptions. If survival depends on being framed as an exception, then attention must be directed at this goal. Therefore, even those experiencing the most direct impact of current policies, reinforce hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, with contestation focused on the quest to highlight individual worth or adjusting definitions of exception, rather than seeking systemic alternatives.

This analysis has found remarkable commonalities in the discursive representations of problems associated with disability and forced migration, used in policy discourse and those used by people with different subject positions, including people with lived experience of the impact. Despite broad consensus among people with diverse subject positions that the existing situation is unjust, discursive representation of the problem fails to contest hegemonic distinctions of entitlement. Policy discourse (Chapter 4) asserts common-sense social logics assume the legitimacy of distinctions of individual entitlement, based on the primacy of national borders and capitalist prioritisation of profit. Meanwhile, people responsible for implementation of policy and practice (Chapter 5) may frame the experiences of disabled asylum seekers as unjust but as inevitable within the confines of hegemonic common-sense. Meanwhile, with the 'scream' of injustice, disabled asylum seekers (Chapter 6) may assert their common humanity and plead for change. However, in the absence of solidarity or effective means of developing and asserting alternatives, the energy of this 'scream' easily dissipates into despair with attention focused on survival within the existing hegemony.

Beyond assumed common-sense representations of the problems, overt debate focuses on political logics. As discussed in Chapter 4, policy discourse of migration draws on political logics of defence, complemented with generosity to those individuals framed as worthy exceptions. Meanwhile, welfare reform, which is a central element of policy associated with disability, portrays entitlement to support as dependent on political logics of individual responsibility. Both policy areas implicitly dislocate the logics of rights which had underpinned the post-war consensus and later the social model of disability. The disabling impact of inaccessible services thereby remains obscured. Instead, with fatalistic framing of the current social order, the problem becomes presented as the pragmatic need to mitigate the impact of asylum policy on those considered worthy of support. Without discourse of rights or equality, logics of generosity can be complemented by fantasmatic logics of pride. Distinctions of entitlement are thereby discursively legitimised.

Lack of hegemonic contestation obscures the radical contingency of the social order and hinders the development of alternatives. This phenomenon is not unique to the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. According to Simon, many people:

> accept inequality and oppression as natural and unchangeable. Gramsci used the term common-sense to denote this uncritical and partly unconscious way in which people perceive the world. (1982, p.26)

This concludes analysis of discursive representation of the problems associated with disability and forced migration. Such representations shape perceptions of possibility and resultant actions. If the problem is that government policies are actively disabling, then the solution cannot be to identify certain individuals framed as exceptions and therefore worthy of apparent generosity. Solutions focused on identifying people or adjusting the criteria of entitlement, can be understood as policing, rather than contesting systemic injustice or promoting a moment of politics ‘when the natural order of domination is interrupted by the institution of the part of those who have no part’ (Rancière, 1999, p.11). The next chapter explores current initiatives regarding the needs of disabled asylum seekers, analysing whether these actions reinforce, reflect or contest hegemonic inequalities of entitlement.

Chapter 7. Perceived solutions to intersectional problems associated with disability and forced migration.

> Sometimes the governing paradigms which have structured all our lives are so powerful that we can think we are doing progressive work when in fact we are reinforcing the paradigms.
>
> (Grillo, 1995, p.16)

The way a problem is represented shapes the solutions that appear appropriate (Bacchi, 2009). This chapter, therefore, turns to explore apparent solutions resulting from different perspectives of the problems associated with disability and forced migration. Attention focuses on existing and proposed initiatives including those emanating from formal UK policy, voluntary sector work, and response to initiatives I organised during this study. Analysis continues to draw on poststructuralist discourse theory (Glynos and Howarth, 2007), investigating how the discursive logics (introduced in Chapter 2) of perceived solutions reinforce, adjust or contest hegemonic representations of the problem and how a moment of more fundamental political contestation might be achieved. This analysis is complemented with Rancière's (1999) distinction, considering whether new initiatives result in policing the system, or facilitate a moment of politics where those with no part assert their part. The barriers to effective hegemonic contestation of systemic inequalities are assessed, exploring how alternatives might be developed.

Analysis of existing and proposed solutions is divided into three broad categories:

Hegemonic reinforcement

Several Home Office initiatives seek to identify disabled migrants, among those labelled as 'vulnerable', presented as worthy of less restrictive conditions than the broader migrant population. These initiatives are widely supported by voluntary sector contributors to my study, framed as promoting positive, if insufficient, change. However, these initiatives do not seek to adjust or contest the hegemony; instead, addressing the needs of 'vulnerable' migrants is portrayed as a way to restore faith in the existing system. As such, hegemonic distinctions of human worth are reinforced, drawing on discursive logics of generosity towards people identified as worthy exceptions. This implicitly validates lesser support, drawing on logics of defence towards the wider migrant population.

Hegemonic adjustment

Analysis of voluntary sector approaches focuses on two particular areas: a) initiatives supporting the immediate survival needs of individual disabled asylum seekers, and b) the campaign for the broader population of asylum seekers to have the 'right to work'. These areas of voluntary sector work draw on logics of pragmatism, seeking to mitigate the impact of current restrictions and inequalities, with some attempt to adjust the borders of entitlement, determining who is included in the parameters of worth. However, without negating the critical importance of

meeting peoples immediate needs, I argue that unless systemic causes are contested, individualised approaches risk reinforcing logics of discretionary generosity. Campaigns for the 'right to work' are underpinned by the assumed normative value of discursive logics of individual responsibility. Although these voluntary sector approaches are framed as if in opposition to Home Office narratives, they fail to contest distinctions of entitlement or to promote an equal part for those with no part (Rancière 1999). I therefore attribute these approaches to policing the existing social order rather than promoting a moment of politics.

Hegemonic contestation

Attempts to contest hegemonic distinctions of entitlement are then considered, focusing on attempts to promote logics of equal rights, rather than discretionary logics of generosity towards individuals framed as worthy of support. I analyse the response to initiatives organised as part of this study, designed to contribute to building a broader, intersectional, movement of resistance, bringing together the disabled people's movement and the asylum sector. This is perceived as potentially contributing to the development of a moment of politics, in which disabled asylum seekers with no part, assert their part (Rancière 1999) and thereby facilitate hegemonic contestation of the distinctions of entitlement on which the prevailing social order is based. My analysis focuses on statutory and voluntary sector response to attempts to improve asylum seekers' access to social care.

Drawing on the logics of critical explanation (Glynos and Howarth, 2007), I analyse the assumed, but rarely contested, social logics underpinning the social order, as well as the political logics shaping the agenda for overt public debate, complemented by fantasmatic logics. If the problems faced by disabled asylum seekers result from systemic distinctions of entitlement, then effective contestation requires hegemonic dissensus rather than adjustment of the balance of political logics. Contestation of the social logics underpinning the contemporary social order, requires new perspectives, including the insights of people with lived experience of the impact of current policy and practice. The final chapter will consider what is missing from hegemonic representations of the problem and associated solutions, together with how more effective contestation might be achieved.

7.1 Hegemonic reinforcement: Home Office initiatives evoking discourse of generosity

Discursive representation of the needs of disabled migrants has not remained constant during the period of investigation. In comparison with previous invisibility (Straimer, 2011) there is undoubtedly greater recognition of the existence of disabled asylum seekers in the immigration sector. I therefore turn to investigate expressions of commitment and practical initiatives introduced by the Home Office. As noted in Chapter 5, Home Office interviewees and focus group members (cs1, 2) contributing to this research expressed willingness to address the needs of disabled people, with one employee systematically exploring provision at different stages of the asylum process. Disability has also become a regular agenda item for Home Office and voluntary sector representatives in the equalities sub-group of the

National Asylum Stakeholder Forum (NASF). This heightened interest may stem in part from concern regarding the legal obligations, such as the public sector equality duty set out in the Equality Act (2010). However, the result of current initiatives is to focus on identifying people who are worthy of some mitigation of wider immigration policy, rather than requiring wider systemic change. The hegemony of discursive representations used in UK government policy, discussed in Chapter 4, is reinforced rather than contested by these initiatives. Hegemonic political logics of generosity and sufficientarianism, together with fantasmatic logics of pride are affirmed, without disrupting political logics of defence or social logics of the prime legitimacy of normality associated with non-disabled citizens of the nation-state.

Initiatives to identify 'vulnerable' individuals

The UK Home Office has introduced several initiatives which frame 'vulnerable' people as worthy exceptions, in comparison with the wider migrant population. As discussed in Chapter 4, the VPRS (2014) offered resettlement to selected refugees affected by the conflict in Syria and framed as 'vulnerable'. This was followed by the Shaw (2016) report into the 'Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons'. The aim was to mitigate the negative impact of detention on people labelled as 'vulnerable'. In addition, the Home Office has developed a safeguarding strategy (Great Britain. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), 2017), using a matrix of indicators of vulnerability, to identify people for referral to wider services. The strategy is applied only to people in the process of a first asylum claim, thereby further restricting categories of entitlement. The Home Office approach to the 'identification and safeguarding of vulnerable adults' was subject to inspection by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (Bolt, 2019), however, the value of identifying people was uncontested. Most recently, the Home Secretary Sajid Javid announced plans for a new scheme to resettle some of the 'world's most vulnerable refugees' (Great Britain. The Home Office and The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, 2019). The label of vulnerability is ill-defined but is core to all these initiatives. The goal is not to remove disabling restrictions, but to improve identification of who is worthy and who is not. This goal is applied to those framed as 'vulnerable', however, it is also the basis of the asylum process, whereby support depends on meeting the criteria of a worthy exception among a wider population of migrants. The divisive impact of exceptionalism can become obscured by its hegemonic ubiquity. During this study, I was reminded by one interviewee that when I first attended the Equalities sub-group of the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum, I remarked on the absurdity of a group seeking 'equality' within an asylum system explicitly designed to assert inequality based on migration status. Yet, after a few years of involvement I had forgotten about my original cynicism and was also seeking some level of change within the system. However, this investigation seeks to understand how causal problems could be addressed.

It is not new to seek to identify people worthy of concessionary treatment. Writing at a time of increased collaboration between the New Labour government and the disability movement, Finkelstein (2007, p.5) warned against focus on 'identifying characteristics of the individual, rather than the nature of society, and then making

selected “concessions” to those so defined’. Such focus may relieve some symptoms but fails to contest causal problems. The precarity of people’s existence is exacerbated when provision of support depends not on need but on being perceived as worthy of discretionary acts of concession. When the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999) removed eligibility to access the welfare state, acknowledgement of the financial costs associated with disability became limited to occasions when ‘the Secretary of State considers that the circumstances of a particular case are exceptional’ (Section 96, paragraph 2). A specific briefing document (2017) was later produced to clarify the eligibility criteria for this apparently exceptional status. The additional support depends on a person’s needs being beyond the responsibility of wider service providers, including local authority social care. However, a Freedom of Information request to the Home Office (reference 52045, 2019) revealed that out of 345 applications submitted in 2018 (after the updated guidance) support was provided to just 10 people. With such low rates of acceptance, the function of this provision for exceptional needs must be questioned. If provision is based on discretionary and rarely-used criteria, it evokes fantasmatic logics, potentially enabling enjoyment of ‘our’ kindness towards those deemed exceptionally worthy of support, thereby affirming ‘our’ (moral) superiority, without contesting the wider logics of defence. Alongside the low probability of successful application, the apparently discretionary nature of wider asylum decision-making may deter people from seeking additional support if disability is perceived as potentially detrimental to their wider claim. There are no clear rights-based criteria for provision for ‘exceptional’ needs. Instead, it appears to be at the discretion of decision-makers.

The Home Office exists to implement government policy, including the restrictions, characterised as ‘the hostile environment’ (Kirkup, 2012) designed to deter migrants from entering or remaining in the UK. By promoting apparent generosity towards individuals framed as worthy, the perceived legitimacy of restrictions towards a wider population framed as unworthy may be reinforced, thereby upholding government policy. Analytical conclusions that these initiatives fail to contest hegemonic discursive distinctions are not, therefore, to suggest that they are ineffective, but that contestation is not the purpose. Moreover, my criticism of these initiatives is not to question the sincerity of Home Office employees (cs 1,2,3,4) who spoke of their wish to collaborate in ensuring that the needs of disabled asylum seekers are met. If the problem is perceived to be located at the level of individuals, then it does not conflict with wider goals to deter migration. My criticism is, therefore, directed at the representation of the problem on which these initiatives are based, rather than the effectiveness of the initiatives.

I consider the specific elements of these policy initiatives before turning to voluntary sector approaches.

Use of euphemistic labels

Current Home Office initiatives adopt euphemistic labels which avoid acknowledgement of commonalities with the circumstances of the wider population of disabled people. Labels of vulnerability are complemented with references to

people having ‘exceptional needs’ (Shaw, 2016) being ‘at risk’ (Immigration Act, 2016; Great Britain. The Home Office, 2018b) or having ‘care needs’ (Great Britain. The Home Office, 2018a). The use of euphemisms for disability is not simply an issue of preferred language. Labels of commonality are potentially revolutionary. As Arendt wrote in relation to the French peasantry:

> what urged them on was the quest for bread and the cry for bread will always be uttered with one voice. Insofar as we all need bread, we are indeed all the same and may as well unite into one body (1963, p.94).

If the needs of disabled asylum seekers in the UK were framed as the ‘quest for bread’, it would become apparent that the problem is one of access to human needs. If the existence and ‘logos’ of disabled asylum seekers were articulated together with the rights and achievements of the international movement of disabled people, this could facilitate awareness of commonalities, unified struggle and potential for what Rancière (1999) refers to as a moment of politics. Ferguson (2017, p.115) argues that ‘an approach which stresses the commonality of mental distress is likely to have a greater political impact than one which prioritises a difference’. Instead, the use of euphemisms of vulnerability or exceptional needs frames disabled asylum seekers as a distinct and insignificant minority. Moreover, such discourse further dislocates the logics of rights and obligations enshrined in the UNCRPD (2006), developed through decades of struggle by the disabled people’s movement. These Home Office initiatives to identify ‘vulnerable’ people are presented as if innovative, however, no discursive intervention occurs in a vacuum. The use of distinct terminology avoids articulation with the disabled people’s movement and the UNCRPD. This obscures the dislocation of rights, reinforcing hegemonic distinctions of entitlement which are core to immigration policy (particularly the 1998 White Paper) and welfare reform (2010) as analysed in Chapter 4.

Individual labels of vulnerability obscure systemic causes of disablement. Despite reliance on labelling individuals as ‘vulnerable’, both the Shaw report (2016) and the ICIBI inspection (2019) acknowledge that the system creates or increases ‘vulnerability’. As Judith Butler (2015b) explains, with reference to wider labels of vulnerability, it is ‘not as if we were not vulnerable before, but when infrastructure fails, that vulnerability comes to the fore’. In a suggestion of awareness of distinctions between the social and medical models of disability, the ICIBI (2019, p.18) report notes that ‘immigration control measures which deny access to services, can increase vulnerability’ with an ‘emerging picture of negative outcomes linked to our system’. The Shaw Report (2016, p.10) also notes that ‘vulnerability is intrinsic to the very fact of detention’. This recognition of the impact of systemic access barriers suggests understanding of the social model (Oliver, 1983). Similarly, Smith and Waite (2019) observe that ‘the governing of migration can … generate and produce vulnerabilities’. Nonetheless, having acknowledged the impact of systemic barriers, both Shaw (2016) and ICIBI (2019) focus on the need to identify and mitigate the impact on people labelled as ‘vulnerable’ rather than to remove the barriers. The solution is thereby framed as a never-ending quest to identify people affected, while systemic causes remain uncontested.

In the context of the injustices faced by disabled asylum seekers, initiatives based on identifying 'vulnerable' people, might be considered a welcome, albeit insufficient response. A voluntary sector employee (vsd2) and a Member of Parliament (pol2) referred to the identification of individuals as an obvious prerequisite for action. However, the ICIBI is explicit about the Home Office objective: identifying 'the needs of vulnerable individuals is a test not just of its competence but also of its capacity for compassion' (Bolt, 2019, p.8). The motivation is thereby to enhance, not to challenge, systemic credibility. Sajid Javid (Great Britain. The Home Office and The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, 2019) explains that the extended scheme to support refugees 'restores dignity and offers refugees a viable future'. He thereby links the scheme with the much-used fantasmatic logic of pride in Britain's 'long history of supporting refugees', discussed in Chapter 4. However, such notions of 'dignity' are reserved for selected individuals. Support provided by an 'imagined community' (Anderson, B., 1983) of citizens are framed as acts of generosity. The interconnections between logics of explanation are essential to this analysis. Fantasmatic logics of pride associated with apparent generosity assert Britain's superiority and therefore entitlement to defend its borders. The quest to identify exceptions reinforces the articulation of hegemonic political logics of generosity with logics of defence to a wider population. Furthermore, the implication of identifying 'vulnerable' individuals is that the wider migrant population is not 'vulnerable'. Distinctions of entitlement therefore rely on hegemonic logics of individual responsibility, with those labelled as 'vulnerable' framed as an exception.

Attempts to identify individuals who are worthy of support, frame the solution as a technical task, devoid of political contestation or dissensus (Rancière, 1999). Policies based on logics of generosity promote a humanitarian response. With reference to similar discursive response in the French context, Ticktin (2011, p.191), describes the result as to create 'subjects not of equal rights, but of pity'. Such discourse is not unique to issues of migration. As Hughes (2019, p.835) argues, 'Pity creates charitable 'targets'… 'charity sustains the distinction between 'the vulnerable' and 'the invulnerable', conferring moral agency on the former while snatching it from the latter'. Yet, despite previously increased recognition of the social model of disability, as Clifford (2020, p.195) observes, 'disability is still predominantly viewed through a pity prism rather than understood to be an equalities issue'. Identifying individuals considered worthy of support, reinforces this 'pity prism', thereby also reinforcing the dislocation of the normative value of equality.

Wider discursive response to Home Office initiatives

Hegemonic distinctions of entitlement remain uncontested by Home Office initiatives. It is perhaps more noteworthy when people, presenting themselves as critical of government policies, still reinforce dominant narratives. In a voluntary sector preparatory meeting of the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum, I was advised not to refer to the system as disabling because it would alienate Home Office staff. Instead, I was told we should focus on the pragmatic goal of supporting the identification of 'vulnerable' people. The purpose is thereby reduced to mitigating the impact of restrictions on selected individuals. Similarly, at a local

level, a volunteer involved with a small town's preparation for the arrival of two resettled Syrian families (uis5) spoke of his motivation to avoid what he perceives as political engagement. As he put it:

> as far as I have any political consciousness, and I'm not sure I do … I choose to get involved with something that I think is achievable.

His focus on what he perceives as 'achievable' may provide tangible results, thereby enabling fantasmatic logics of pride, but does not contest systemic causes. According to Ticktin (2011, p.5), the result of focusing on achievable exceptions, worthy of generosity, is that:

> Rather than furthering solidarity or equality in the face of discriminatory policies and laws … regimes of care end up reproducing inequalities and racial, gendered, and geopolitical hierarchies: I suggest that this politics of care is a form of antipolitics.

Contrary to the presentation by its advocates, the antipolitics underpinning initiatives based on apparent generosity towards selected individuals is a political position affirming hegemonic dislocation of rights, underpinned with the assumption that systemic change is impossible. Mondon and Winter (2020, p.3) argue that 'apathy is a political position and a reactionary one. Things do not have to be this way'. If the problem is not framed as systemic injustice, then the solution does not require systemic change. The dislocation of rights is reinforced, with some mitigation of suffering towards selected individuals then presented as sufficient. This example is not unique to intersectional issues of disability and migration in the UK. With reference to activism against immigration detention and deportation in the USA, Nancy Hiemstra warns that:

> it is critical that we remember the goal is not to bring order to the chaos to just build a better 'D and D system' [detention and deportation] … Instead, those working for change must target the driving forces behind the existence of the system. We must therefore work for broader structural changes regarding the economic dependencies that have been created, the intimate ties between corporations and policymakers, and the popularity of anti-immigrant discourse. (2016, p.72)

The identification of people framed as worthy exceptions to systemic restrictions may result in legitimising hegemonic distinctions of human worth and building a 'better' system. Initiatives based on such distinctions, further dislocate a link between need and entitlement to support. The result is that inherently discretionary political logics of generosity are reinforced, inevitably leaving some people without support. Furthermore, without rights to support, people lose the ability to contest decisions, and precarity is increased. Initiatives based on identifying people worthy of support therefore reinforce, rather than contest, hegemonic inequalities.

Academic literature regarding disability and migration risks further reinforcing hegemonic discursive assumptions. A core part of the problem is presented as lack of data regarding numbers of disabled asylum seekers in the UK (Harris and Roberts, 2001; Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008). Taking a more international perspective, but arriving at similar conclusions, Crock, Ernst and McCallum Ao

(2012, p.736) argue that the 'fact that there are as yet no reliable statistics on the incidence of disabilities amongst refugees and asylum seekers is a measure of the neglect'. Yet, if the system itself is disabling then counting the number of people it disables is no solution. An individualistic approach to the exclusion of disabled people was discredited with the development of the social model. As Oliver and Barnes explain:

> Head counting … has long been regarded as an essential element of social policy because, so it is argued, governments are unlikely to commit resources to particular policy initiatives unless they can be reasonably sure of the numbers of people who may benefit and have some idea of the costs involved (1998, p.13)

Counting people and identifying individuals may be hegemonically construed as a manageable policy goal, whereas system change is not. However, attempts to identify and count disabled people assume clear and stable distinctions between disabled and non-disabled people. Furthermore, as Oliver and Barnes (ibid) argue, policy solutions based on 'head counting' implicitly obscure the impact of systemic, disabling restrictions, thereby impeding political change. This relates to earlier criticism of the seminal study (Harris and Roberts, 2001) in which the apparent diversity of asylum seekers is affirmed by a list of impairments. If the problem is framed as the diversity of medical conditions, then the solution appears to be a technical issue of identifying and providing 'special' support, rather than a political issue of contesting inequality and denial of rights. The social model was developed in contestation of individualistic, charitable initiatives. The solution to the restrictions faced by disabled asylum seekers cannot be the imposition of individualistic charitable initiatives.

7.2 Hegemonic adjustment: Voluntary sector focus on logics of pragmatism and individual responsibility

Analysis now turns to voluntary sector responses to the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers. Two key areas of voluntary sector work are considered: response to the immediate survival needs of individual asylum seekers and wider campaigns for asylum seekers to have the 'right to work'. These responses are framed as in opposition to Home Office restrictions, but the focus is on pragmatic mitigation of suffering rather than systemic contestation. The result risks reinforcing hegemonic distinctions of entitlement and the assumed impossibility of systemic change.

Pragmatic focus on addressing immediate survival needs

The voluntary sector frequently provides lifesaving support to disabled and non-disabled asylum seekers impacted by systematic restrictions. In the context of the immediacy of struggles for survival, the value of such support cannot be underestimated. People may be supported to meet their physical and emotional needs, including food, shelter, advice, and social contact. The focus is on what is perceived as pragmatically achievable within existing policy and practice. The result may be to include different people and perhaps greater numbers of people in the

hegemonic framing of 'worth', or to adjust the discursive borders of entitlement, but not to contest the existence of systemic inequalities.

The quest to meet an individual's immediate needs is not necessarily distinct from contesting hegemonic acceptance of distinctions of human worth. The experiences of das3 highlight the potentially interrelated nature of individual and systemic targets. He was housed in local authority accommodation in response to his mental health support needs. He recalled that one day when he went to fetch his financial support, he was informed that his entitlement to housing and support would stop in five weeks. Voluntary sector housing providers then told him that his PTSD and addictions meant it would not be possible for him to be hosted by volunteers. He was advised that after being evicted he would need to sleep in a night shelter and use local drop-in centres for food. Luckily, he had sufficient skills and knowledge to contact a voluntary sector advocate, who found that counter to legal requirements, there had been no formal reassessment prior to the local authority decision to evict him. Das3 then waited for a year without news of either a reassessment or of the threatened eviction. His fear of prompting the removal of support meant that he was reluctant to ask for an update. The reassessment eventually took place, more than a year after Social Services had said it had been done. According to the advocate who attended the reassessment with das3, it 'seemed decision had already been made… this was about funding, not about his needs'. Das3 then waited another 6 months before being informed that he had 'no eligible needs'. According to his advocate, he had been assessed as able to cook for himself, because in his current home there was regular food provided by Fairshare, which he could take from the fridge. He was also assessed as capable of making relationships. The evidence for this was that when his PTSD causes him to scream in the night, other people in the house come to support him. The result of this assessment was that he would be transferred to NASS accommodation and potentially dispersed to another area of the country. This would remove him from his current sources of food and emotional support. Das3 expressed exasperation at the nonsensical removal of support such that his health would deteriorate, and he would again become eligible for urgent support. Contestation of the lack of assessment and the subsequent threatened eviction was in response to the immediate crisis. However, contestation of Social Services processes may have impacted on the assumed insignificance of his needs.

If survival depends on being framed as an exception to wider restrictions, then this must be the immediate focus. A voluntary sector employee (vsi5) describes response to the needs of an asylum seeker with a chronic health problem:

> getting him the travel card was probably the number one thing we did. Having him live somewhere that wasn't so far away from the hospital was the other thing, and then masses and masses and masses of support with NHS charging letters. Because he's destitute, he doesn't have any entitlement to treatment.

Without questioning the value of such work, the danger is that attention becomes directed at framing particular individuals as deserving, reinforcing fatalistic

understanding of systemic causes. The hegemony is reinforced, irrespective of whether the motivation is pragmatic.

The focus on what is perceived as achievable can be partly explained by structural factors. Voluntary sector organisations rely on funding, which is facilitated by evidence of impact. If systemic change is perceived as unachievable or undesirable, then it may be less readily supported by funders, than provision for the immediate needs of people framed as worthy. Voluntary sector funding may depend on pragmatic focus on targets which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART). However, as Prather (2015, p.14) argues, such 'criteria fit extremely well' when focused on returning a particular issue 'to normal', but do not promote more fundamental organisational change. Similarly, the neoliberal hegemony and systemic root causes of current inequalities cannot be easily framed in the confines of SMART targets. The assumed intractability of systemic change is perpetuated by pragmatic focus on symptoms rather than causes.

Informal support provided by friends and fellow nationals may be more significant to the immediate survival of asylum seekers than the work of formal voluntary sector organisations. As legal professional (lp2) notes:

> I suspect that there are people who do a huge amount who are not getting any support and probably do spend some of their own meagre pittance on doing that.

This support may be a lifeline to people in crisis, such as experienced by das8 and 17, outlined in Chapter 6. However, the contributions of friends, family or informal supporters are unquantifiable. In a discussion group (laer2), an interpreter for several disabled asylum seekers explained that 'people like me are doing this unpaid all the time. I fill in forms … try and find solutions for people. This work is invisible to organisations'. This invisibility is exemplified by my assumptions that the support received by das8 was provided by the voluntary sector rather than fellow nationals, as discussed in Chapter 6. There are commonalities with the unpaid care on which many disabled citizens rely (Slasberg and Beresford, 2014), although citizens have greater formal entitlements, including from the welfare state. Provision of informal support to citizens or migrants may be motivated by logics of solidarity and equality, but there is inherent precarity and inequality if one person's survival depends on gifts from another. Informal support may go on for years, however, as legal professional (lp1) explains, 'finally … generosity runs out and a friend that they have been staying with … can't deal with it anymore'. At this point, a person reverts to reliance on statutory services, or the lack thereof. Acts of solidarity based on logics of equality may be counter-hegemonic, however, if focused on an individual level, the impact is limited. Voluntary sector organisations have greater capacity and motivation to promote their work in public discourse, thereby heightening their hegemonic influence.

Beyond the inherent inequalities, informal support may even facilitate wider removal of services. Statutory support may be denied if needs are being met elsewhere. As lp1 continues:

> I am not at all saying they should be done away with, but you know … a wonderful network of people helping people and that makes it harder to prove your case … in some cases I have had to say, well, you are just going to have to withdraw the support you are providing to show that they can't cope.

Pragmatic acts of discretionary generosity may be essential to people's immediate survival, however, such actions can be no solution to systemic inequalities.

Discretionary support as a means of survival is more accessible to some than to others. As discussed in Chapter 6, attempts to gain publicity, and prevent the deportation of a blind man convicted of rape (das17) were unsuccessful. In contrast, a tweet from barrister Colin Yeo (April 4th 2019b) regarding the threatened forced removal of a 78-year-old with Alzheimer's disease, received more than 600 comments and 11,000 'likes'. He commented that he was 'astounded' by the level of response to one example of the injustice faced by an immigration lawyer 'day in day out'. Distinctions in levels of public support may stem from the dissonance with social logics of normalcy. Deportation may appear as a solution to the criminal 'other', affirming 'our' moral superiority and facilitating the psychoanalytic quest for 'enjoyment' (Stavrakakis 2005) of a unified society unsullied by the 'unintegrated' other (Schinkel, 2013, 2017). The capacity for 'enjoyment' is limited if the victim evokes pity. An older person with Alzheimer's cannot so easily be discarded as the migrant 'other' or the 'failed citizen' (Anderson, B.L., 2013). If a person's immediate survival is at risk, then all methods of resistance may be considered legitimate, including representing a person as a worthy exception to systemic restrictions. However, unless the distinction is made clear, attempts to frame an individual as a worthy exception may be confused with attempts to address causal problems.

Ostensibly pragmatic and individualised approaches cannot address hegemonic causal distinctions. Writing with regard to charitable work with disabled citizens, Clifford (2020, p.257) describes how the pragmatic focus of lobbying may have resulted in benefit-claimants having less long to wait without financial support. However, as she puts it, 'the overall direction of policy remains unchanged and grave injustices continue'. Furthermore, the risk of focusing on policy mitigation is that this becomes the target with an increasingly fatalistic approach to systemic causes. Such work may be considered akin to pulling drowning babies out of a river without stopping the person throwing them in. In relation to disabled asylum seekers, such practices reinforce the notion that any acknowledgement of people's existence is better than none.

Campaigns for the 'right to work' evoke logics of responsibility, modifying borders of entitlement while affirming intersectional divisions

Attention now turns to discursive representations underpinning ongoing voluntary sector campaigns for asylum seekers to have the 'right to work'. This right was removed by the New Labour government in 2002 in response to the goal to clarify whether an asylum seeker is genuinely migrating to flee persecution or is seeking economic betterment (Great Britain. Parliament. House of Lords, 2002). A coalition of immigration voluntary sector organisations label restoration of the 'right to work'

as ‘common sense’ (Lift the Ban, 2020). It may appear laudable to focus on rights, rather than logics of generosity or defence. The potential for individual contribution is foregrounded, thereby countering discourse of asylum seekers as being lazy and unskilled. However, this campaign cannot be understood in isolation from the neoliberal hegemony.

The campaign foregrounds the convergence of disparate political perspectives as if inherently beneficial. This is akin to the unifying of ‘Volvos and vegans’ against airport expansion (Griggs and Howarth, 2016), discussed in Chapter 2. On 5th May 2019, the campaign group Asylum Matters tweeted that the ‘right to work’ is ‘common-sense’. The suggestion that if something is ‘common-sense’ then it is beneficial, suggests that the restrictions and inequalities imposed on asylum seekers result from an aberration rather than from deliberate policy and practice. The same month, Marvin Rees, Labour Mayor of Bristol publicly supported this campaign (Rees, 2019), writing that it would be ‘good for the Treasury, saving money on welfare payments’. However, the assumed normative value of consensus reflects failure to contest hegemonic discourse. Articulation with Treasury goals, ‘saving money on welfare payments’ and reducing the ‘burden’ on the taxpayer (Lift the Ban, 2020) may be the ‘common-sense’ of the social order but are also core to hegemonic discursive inequalities. Such arguments evoke political logics of individual responsibility akin to those set out in the biopsychosocial model (Waddell and Aylward, 2009) of disability, reinforce core social logics of the primacy of economic contribution, and implicitly frame those people that do not work as burdensome. Reinforcing the ‘common-sense’ on which the social order is based cannot address hegemonic inequalities.

In seeking consensual change, the campaign seeks to mitigate the suffering of some people. If asylum seekers had the ‘right to work’, then some would be proven to be ‘responsible’ contributors to the economy. Goodfellow (2019, p.145) refers to studies that show that migration is good for the economy as, ‘one weapon in campaigners’ arsenal’, challenging hegemonic narratives of immigrants as ‘“scroungers”, after benefits’, and as ‘taking British people’s jobs’. However, the commonalities of these references with hegemonic discourse of welfare reform, which disproportionately targets disabled people (Ryan, 2019), cannot be ignored. The campaign for the ‘right to work’ has developed at the same time as government targets to get an extra million disabled people into work (Great Britain. Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health, 2017, p.8), through a programme of sanctions and benefit cuts (Clifford, 2020, p.74). This policy has been attributed to the deaths of many disabled people (Ryan, 2019; Clifford, 2020), among the 120,000 people estimated to have died as a result of austerity policies (Stewart, 2019). For disabled citizens, the problem is not the ‘right’ to work but the barriers to finding appropriate work and the regime of sanctions if work is not found. Framing the ‘right to work’ as if a non-contentious goal actively reinforces hegemonic assumptions of the value of individual responsibility, thereby reinforcing the basis of wider distinctions of assumed worth and undermining the discursive focus of the disabled people’s movement. While the disabled people’s movement contests the prioritising of individual responsibility (Ryan, 2019; Clifford, 2020), the asylum sector

advocates this goal. Like the re-emergence of the term ‘vulnerable’ to refer to disabled people discussed in Chapter 1, normative discourse of the ‘right to work’ highlights the discursive dissonance between the asylum sector and the disabled people’s movement.

Disabled asylum seekers face barriers to employment on account of response to both disability and migration status. Russell and Malhotra (2002) argue that in a capitalist economy, the employment of disabled people is resisted as disabled people may be less productive and need more support, therefore increasing production costs. Writing with reference to the USA, they cite that in 2000, ten years after the Americans with Disabilities Act, ‘despite a... national official unemployment rate of 4.2%, the unemployment rate for working-age disabled population has barely budged from its chronic level of 65-71%’ (ibid). In addition to the barriers faced by disabled citizens, according to laer1, refugees complain of additional stress caused by having to seek employment, in addition to other struggles, and when there are such barriers to finding, and being offered, suitable work. A study by Isabel Ruiz and Carlos Vargas-Silva (2018, p.863) found that in comparison with people born in the UK, refugees remain 22% less likely to be employed and have weekly earnings £196 lower than people born in the UK. Furthermore, it was found that 68% of refugees have a health condition which limits the amount they can work, compared with 45% of the UK-born population. The authors suggest that even if asylum seekers were to gain the ‘right to work’, employers may be reticent to employ someone without certainty as to how long they can stay in the UK (2018, p.860). Focusing on the legal ‘right’ distracts from the multiple inequalities causing current problems, instead, reinforcing the normative value of economic contribution.

The rights-based discourse of the campaign may appear counter to hegemonic discourse of generosity and defence but affirms neoliberal logics of individual responsibility as a solution. When das13 spoke of the ‘right to work’, he referred to his willingness to ‘work hard’, presenting this as an indicator of his value. He appeared to envisage that this trait would result in well-paid, secure employment becoming available, with an associated middle-class lifestyle akin to that of the asylum voluntary sector staff with whom he had contact. Referring to the US context, Beltràn (2009, p.611) describes how migrants describe themselves as ‘hard-working’ to gain legitimacy, which, as he asserts, is ‘simply put, a bad idea’. He argues that ‘the capacity to work hard and earn, confers little or no civic standing on raced subjects’. He criticises pro-immigrant forces that use ‘incoherent arguments regarding justice and the value of the undocumented while failing to address central questions of equality and power’. The assumed consequences of the ‘right to work’, indicated by das13 are mirrored by a submission to the London sitting of the Permanent People’s Tribunal on migration in 2018. This referred to the ‘right to work’ as providing the 'possibility of a decent livelihood and other rights taken for granted by others’. There was no explanation as to who these ‘others’ include. It is doubtful that anyone would campaign to be subject to what Fletcher and Wright (2018) refer to as the ‘authoritarian approach to unemployment’ in which missing an appointment due to ill-health for example, results in sanctions such that all financial support is removed.

Systemic inequalities are glossed over by such campaigns, obscuring the fact that asylum seekers and disabled people are already working. Nobody contributing to this study could be described as leading a life of leisure. Instead, people's lives are structured by the unpaid work of survival (Yeo, 2018). Many asylum seekers may currently rely on illegal work. However, if people gained the 'right to work', we cannot assume that improved conditions for the same work would be available. Moreover, in the light of the experiences of UK citizens, it *can* be assumed that further conditions would be applied to already low levels of state support. Furthermore, such support could be removed as the logical conclusion to promotion of logics of individual responsibility. The 'right to work' might therefore exacerbate the precarity of people's existence.

Normative associations between paid work and human value are not new. In 1961, Foucault argued that hostile attitudes towards madness relate to economic productivity. People unable to work in a capitalist economy are presented as undeserving, threatening prevailing assumptions of the prime value of economic contribution. Grover and Piggott (2013, p.36) argue that promotion of the 'right to work':

> Emphasise[s] paid work as being the means by which individuals can express their responsibilities as active citizens ... people who, for whatever reason, cannot work are othered as being particularly problematic and burdensome.

Without employment, asylum seekers are automatically framed among those who are burdensome. Campaigns for the 'right to work' do not contest such framing, but simply seek to adjust who the label is applied to. Disabled asylum seekers can be assumed to be disproportionately among those for whom the label of burden is reinforced.

To address the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers requires contestation not reinforcement of the common-sense on which the social order is based. The value of work in a capitalist economy needs to be questioned rather than reinforced. As Russell and Malhotra (2002, p.223) argue:

> If the goal of social justice is to ensure the dignity of each and every person, then buying into the largely capitalist-induced belief that work equates with self-esteem or is a condition for membership of the human race … only serves to oppress us all.

If the restrictions and inequalities faced by disabled asylum seekers are underpinned by social logics of the primacy of economic contribution, then these logics should be contested. If, as Anderson (2013, p.180) argues, the problem were to be framed not as the need for 'a job but with the need for subsistence, not with a spouse but with the need for mutual care and support', then this would have 'the potential to open up politics and analysis'. It would invite 'an open, complex, and multifaceted contemporary "us" that has the potential of being shaped by shared imagined futures as well as shared imagined pasts'. The development of a multifaceted 'us' would rely on addressing intersectional divisions such as not only to adjust the borders but also to contest the existence of distinctions of entitlement.

Despite criticism of the restrictions and inequalities of the asylum sector, neither of the broad categories of voluntary sector approaches considered in this chapter contest hegemonic discursive representations of disability and migration. I am not suggesting that asylum seekers should be banned from paid work, or that it is detrimental to identify people with specific medical needs, or to offer acts of generosity. However, I argue that none of these approaches is a useful campaign focus. The assumed value of pragmatic goals of consensus limits the development of alternatives and hinders scope for political contestation to adjusting who is framed as within the criteria of worth and who is not. In so doing, hegemonic distinctions of worth are reinforced rather than contested. Systemic change may be difficult but, in framing it as *too* difficult, it becomes impossible.

7.3 Hegemonic contestation: attempted assertion of social model discourse and logics of equal rights

As part of the action research component of this study, I sought to contribute to developing alternatives to current injustice by contributing to building a broader movement of resistance based on rights and equality. Before considering what hindered effective contestation, it is necessary to review what took place. I worked with a group of activists to organise events bringing together the asylum sector, the disabled people's movement, and allies. Learning from the expertise of intersectional lived experience and the achievements of both sectors, the goal was to promote a social model approach to addressing the barriers faced by disabled asylum seekers. Examples from these efforts have been cited throughout the study. Attention now focuses on the response to attempts to assert the rights of asylum seekers to access social care, exploring where people with different subject positions perceive expertise to be located, and with whom allegiances should be drawn. This example highlights how hegemonic narratives are affirmed and alternatives precluded, despite people expressing commitment to addressing intersectional injustice.

It must be stressed at the outset that social care is not a need in itself, but a means of overcoming barriers to meeting human needs. This discursive distinction may appear inconsequential when people are struggling for survival. However, if the problem is framed as collective needs to address socially constructed barriers meeting human needs, then the solutions appear distinct from if the problem is located at the level of individuals with 'special' or abnormal needs. It is also important to acknowledge that, irrespective of migration status, not all disabled people require, or are eligible for, social care. Among asylum seekers contributing to this study, half referred to social care needs. However, as the sampling is not representative, this proportion is not suggested to be indicative of the wider population.

The legal and policy context of intersectional rights to social care

Before turning to the specific events of this study, it is necessary to outline the legal and policy context. Any resident in the UK is entitled to a community care

assessment, irrespective of migration status. These rights stem from the National Assistance Act (1948), updated by the Care Act (2014). Responsibility to meet eligible needs for care and support lies with the local authority if 'the adult is ordinarily resident in the authority's area' (The Care Act, 2014, section 18.1). Beyond this, UK policy and practice must be in accordance with the UNCRPD (2006), particularly Article 19, obliging state authorities to provide 'in-home, residential and other community support services … necessary to support living and inclusion in the community … with choices equal to others'. However, as highlighted by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (2013), local authority funding cuts have resulted in increased thresholds for eligibility for care and compounded a crisis of social care provision (Slasberg and Beresford, 2014, 2016). Cuts to the funding of social care are underpinned by social logics framing disabled people as an economic burden, which at times of scarcity needs to be reduced.

Responsibility for provision of social care for asylum seekers has been subject to legal wrangling between local authorities and the state (Westminster City Council vs National Asylum Support Service 2002; Slough judgement 2006). Apparent confusion regarding the entitlements of asylum seekers with care needs in the context of the Care Act (2014) resulted in the Home Office issuing new guidance (2018a) affirming local authority responsibilities. There are some restrictions in the eligibility of asylum seekers: people are ineligible, if their 'needs for care and support have arisen solely (a) because the adult is destitute, or (b) because of the physical effects, or anticipated physical effects, of being destitute' (The Care Act, 2014, paragraph 2). Furthermore, people whose asylum claims have been refused are ineligible for care, unless an assessment indicates that this would breach Human Rights (Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act, 2002, schedule 3). Confusion regarding these restrictions, together with social logics whereby disabled asylum seekers are assumed to have lesser priority, may be the cause of barriers accessing social care faced by contributors to this study (das3,4,8,9,11,13). Many of the barriers people recounted appear to contravene legal entitlement, however, without access to legal support, these breaches remain uncontested. According to a legal practitioner (lp1) specialising in social care issues, 'immigration status is a massive difference' in the ease of access to social care. This practitioner regularly supports asylum seekers accessing social care but had not been approached regarding any barriers faced by people selected for the VPRS, despite the apparent focus on 'vulnerable' people. As the scheme is administered by the local authority and selected people have similar entitlement to citizens, there appear to be fewer barriers accessing services.

The events organised as part of this study took place within one local authority. There is no reason to suggest that social care provision is markedly different in other authorities, however it is necessary to consider the context of this example.

Specific policy context from one local authority

At the time of organising these events, Bristol City Council faced a £108 million funding shortfall (2018, p.10). Although this was not referenced by any of the contributors to this study, the impact on ability to meet statutory social care obligations must be considered. In the context of this funding shortfall, a transformation of social care provision had been introduced, euphemistically called the 'Better lives programme' ensuring the 'right level and type of support' (Bristol City Council, 2018, p.25), combined with 'value for money' (Bristol City Council, 2018, p.27). The dislocation of logics of rights from Council practice is reinforced by a market-driven approach to provision of care services. In its presentation of social care reform, the Council promotes the need for a 'stronger and more resilient care market', ensuring 'good investment' (Bristol City Council, 2017). As Giroux (2008, p.594) warns, when 'the social state is displaced by the market, a new kind of politics is emerging, in which some lives, if not whole groups, are seen as disposable and redundant'. This 'new kind of politics' is underpinned by an implicitly biopsychosocial (Waddell and Aylward, 2009) approach, with social care reforms, foregrounding the need to 'maximise people's independence' (Bristol City Council, 2018, p.25). This tacitly contests a social model approach to collective responsibility to address barriers.

The Council's presentation of social care reform makes no explicit reference to barriers associated with forced migration. There are 13 references to 'citizen' (Bristol City Council, 2018). In a similar manner to the 1998 White Paper, analysed in Chapter 4, it is unclear whether 'citizen' is used to refer to 'people' or to distinguish from migrants. Lack of direct reference to the needs of non-citizens results in these issues remaining confined to the unreferenced 'other'.

The redefining of independent living

Rights to independent living are central to the legal and policy context of social care. These rights were achieved through decades of struggle by disabled activists culminating in the UNCRPD. Highlighting poststructuralist assumptions discussed in Chapter 2 (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Howarth, D.R., Norval and Stavrakakis, 2000; Glynos and Howarth, 2007) regarding the inherent connection between our understanding of the world and its existence, service reductions are rooted in discursive representations of social care; hegemonic notions of independent living are being systematically undermined by redefining its meaning. Rather than being a right to equality as defined by the UNCRPD, use of social care is becoming framed as a negative indicator of being 'dependent' (Bristol City Council, 2018, p.11). The notion of 'independent living' is effectively redefined to mean absence of social care. Asylum seekers and citizens (das3,13, and udc3) contributing to this study recalled being told that service reduction would enable them to 'live more independently'. Such reductions were contested by a disabled citizen (udc3) who asserted, 'I am more independent if I have the support I need'. His conception, shared by the wider

disabled people's movement, is the basis of the UNCRPD. As Clifford asserts, independent living 'does not mean doing everything for yourself' (2020, p.53). According to udc5, the meaning of 'independent-living' developed and enshrined in the UNCRPD (2006) has become co-opted, distorted and weaponised against the people whose needs it was designed to support. This approach is not unique to a particular local authority. As Ferguson (2017, p.24) explains, discursive justification of austerity is provided by rebranding cuts in services 'in the name of promoting "independence"'. Such discourse reinforces hegemonic dislocation of rights to support and the collective responsibility to remove barriers enshrined in the UNCRPD (2006, article 19). The assumed normative value of facing no barriers accessing mainstream services is underpinned by social logics framing disabled people as an economic burden.

The findings of this study must be understood in the context of this wider crisis in social care. However, the focus here, is not on the crisis itself, but the resistance to hegemonic contestation.

7.4 Collaborative efforts to address intersectional restrictions.

Attempts to bring together the asylum sector and the disabled people's movement highlight the barriers contesting hegemonic discursive divisions. The biggest of the events organised as part of this study, included a public tribute (dmas1) to disabled asylum seekers and refugees who have been failed. At this event, Bristol Mayor Marvin Rees apologised for Council failings that had contributed to the murders of Kamil Ahmad and Bijan Ebrahimi. He committed 'to making sure we look at everything that happened and everything that didn't happen'.

Figure 5: Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees, apologised for the Council's failings in preventing the deaths of Kamil Ahmad and Bijan Ebrahimi

At the same event, a voluntary sector employee spoke of asylum seekers with care needs facing eviction from local authority supported accommodation and made street homeless. This person warned that without action, further lives will be lost. Another meeting (dmas2) was therefore scheduled with MPs, City Council officials and social care staff specifically to discuss the problem and appropriate response.

It was hoped that the Mayor's statement combined with heightened awareness of the consequences of failure to address the intersectional barriers faced by disabled asylum seekers increased the potential to secure progress. However, despite the symbolic significance of the Mayor's statement, the local authority and voluntary sector response to this second meeting (dmas2) highlights the barriers to hegemonic contestation and the development of alternatives.

Response to the issues asserted in this meeting illustrate three main barriers to hegemonic contestation. Firstly, voluntary sector restrictions, or perceived restrictions, as to what is strategically permissible to contest. Secondly, disregard for intersectional lived experience and the insights of the disabled people's movement. Thirdly, liberal assumptions of the normative value of pragmatism and consensus. These factors combine to exclude voices of dissent and limit contestation to policing the social order.

Apparent restrictions faced by the asylum voluntary sector

In preparation for the meeting (dmas2), a short film was made (Yeo and Spencer, 2018), highlighting the key messages of migrants seeking social care. Speaking on camera, das3 spoke of being threatened with eviction from Social Services supported accommodation without having had his needs reassessed. His voluntary sector advocate explained how das3 was being denied his rights under the Care Act (2014). This advocate was the only person contributing to the film in a paid capacity. This is significant because employees may be more constrained regarding what it is permissible to say. One week before the meeting at which the film would be shown, the advocate's employer expressed concern about the film's implied criticism of Council practices, explaining, we 'work in partnership with the Council, so we need to be mindful of that'. The NGO advocate then explained that, having discussed it with colleagues, he was withdrawing his criticisms. This was followed by the Chief Executive withdrawing consent for the whole organisation's involvement (referenced in Chapter 3). No apology, reference to factual inaccuracy, or grounds for the last-minute decision were provided, beyond the earlier concerns about partnership with the Council. With reference to collaboration between disability charities and the government, Clifford (2020, p.263) calls for acknowledgement that 'the bottom line for these charities is not to do with the treatment of disabled people but their own organisational interests'. The reluctance of charities and other voluntary organisations to criticise powerful interests has impact beyond the charity itself. As Beresford (2012) explains, charities present themselves as 'the nation's conscience'. If these organisations collaborate with government, whether at local or national level, then as Clifford (2020, p.263) argues, it encourages public perceptions that 'everything is essentially OK'. Media reliance on spokespeople from these accredited organisations means that voluntary sector acquiescence with dominant narratives, removes criticism from public discourse.

For the purposes of the local authority meeting, the film was reedited, with the same messages, coming from an unpaid activist rather than a voluntary sector employee. It was then presented to local and national politicians, social care, and voluntary

sector staff at a roundtable meeting (dmas2). Social care staff responded to the film by committing to address what they framed as multiple oversights, while vociferously rejecting systemic barriers. This response exemplifies disregard for the expertise of experience, as will now be discussed.

The exclusion of voices of lived experience resulting from assumed correlations between power and expertise

The responses from attendees of the meeting (dmas2) suggest that attempts by statutory services and the asylum voluntary sector to respond to the care needs of asylum seekers are impeded by disregard or ignorance of the experiences and achievements of the disabled people's movement. Rather than respecting the expertise of experience in collaborative quests to contest hegemonic causes of intersectional injustice, the focus is on maintaining dominant power relations. Logics of generosity are evoked to mitigate the impact of existing restrictions while resisting discursive contestation.

The apparent impossibility of the Council's task to balance the budget without impacting on statutory duties cannot be denied. However, voluntary sector, social care and Council staff resisted attempts to acknowledge the systemic scale of the problem or contest the dislocation of rights. Instead, a Council leader called for a taskforce to 'tweak the pathways' necessary to access social care. The taskforce members were selected to exclude disabled service users or activists who could speak independently of Council funding. This would avoid focus on systemic causes of service restrictions, including the dislocation of logics of rights, and the failure to meet obligations associated with independent living in the UNCRPD. The exclusion of people with specific knowledge and experience of disability rights obscures the gaps in the knowledge of those who are involved. The stated rationale was that urgent action was needed and that including disabled people would take longer. Ongoing restrictions are thereby justified by the impact of previous restrictions. Such attempted justification of the exclusion of disabled people is common. Clifford (2020, p.33) criticises the mainstream media tendency to 'seek opinion on disability issues from non-disabled people'. When asked whether it would be acceptable to have a taskforce examining racism, composed entirely of white people, a senior Council executive responded that 'we work with disabled people all the time, are you suggesting we do not know what we are doing?'. The implication of this question is that Council expertise cannot be questioned by those with lived experience of the impact. This official continued that 'people with lived experience might understand their own lives, but don't understand how the system works'. Despite this person's expressed recognition that disabled asylum seekers experience injustice, the implicit assertion that 'the system works', limits debate to adjustments rather than contestation. The explicit exclusion of people who would contest the assumption that the 'system works' enables hegemonic discourse to remain unchallenged. As Mondon and Winter (2020, p.209) 'emancipatory politics will never come from the top as the powerful will always resist the loss of their status'. Building on Fricker's (2007) conception of epistemic injustice referenced in Chapter 6, the assumed superior value of the knowledge of the powerful, results in

systematically undervaluing the insights of marginalised people, simultaneously denying people the opportunities to gain the experiences valued by the existing social order.

‘Strength-based approach’ to provision of services

Rejection of the expertise of people with lived experience may be discursively framed without contesting apparent commitment to asserting the rights of these same people. The commitment of social care staff to a ‘strength-based approach’ to care assessments is an example of this discursive incongruence. This approach is not new or unique to asylum seekers. It was introduced as a means to ‘transform the dominant paradigm’ (Graybeal, 2001) from one in which all disabled people are provided with similar service, to one focused on personalised care, built on the ‘choice and control’ of service users. This approach, therefore, draws on similar discourse to that used in the 2006 UK White Paper analysed in Chapter 4. This approach is designed to assess the various assets already available to a person, without assuming that formal service provision is the appropriate solution. However, Slasberg and Beresford criticise the approach as defining people’s needs according to the resources available and amplifying a ‘taboo about unmet need’ (2017, p.272). The impact of such assessment methods was highlighted in the 2018 report from Deaf and Disabled People’s Organisations to the United Nations disability committee. It was reported that ‘strength-based’ assessments are designed to reduce state-funded support, thereby denying ‘people the same opportunities to be included in the community with choice and control over our own lives’ (Inclusion London, 2018, p.31). Their criticisms are borne out by the experiences of das13, who explained he had felt misled into focusing on what he does for himself and had not been asked about the barriers he faces or how these can be addressed. He had then had support removed and became street homeless. Despite this existing critique and the immediacy of the testimony of das13, social care staff at the meeting (dmas2) vociferously rejected the film’s criticism of a strength-based approach. One staff member described it as ‘empowering’ to focus on people’s strengths rather than their weaknesses. If it is assumed that meeting needs without social care is a ‘strength’, then this also implies that requiring support and services is a weakness. Rather than taking a social model approach and focusing on overcoming mainstream barriers, the focus is on individual capacity. The ableist and citizen-focused construction of hegemonic provision is thereby obscured. This further undermines the progress of the disabled people’s movement and the obligations of the UNCRPD.

The affective appeal of pragmatism and consensus

The affective appeal of avoidance of disagreement and political contestation may be the motivation for the selection of people to be involved in the taskgroup but is a key impediment to change. None of the voluntary sector representatives in the meeting supported disabled activists questioning the Council’s approach. Similarly, the assumed normative value of solutions based on consensus was asserted by people with different levels of involvement in this study (vsd2, uis6, pol1). As Rancière (1999, p.124) explains, ‘the consensus system represents itself to itself as the world of law as opposed to the world of non-law’. Wider change, according to

uis6, is too political and therefore, drawing on logics of fatalism, assumed to be unachievable. The exclusion of the experiences, knowledge, and commitment of voices of dissent and the expertise of lived experience from the Council's task force had multiple ramifications. Working with people with similar perspectives to one's own can facilitate communication and affirm the apparent validity of a person's own understanding. The exclusion of disagreement hinders recognition of gaps in knowledge, thereby enabling an illusion of consensus and affirming the righteousness of those involved. As Mouffe (2005a, p.10) explains, 'every consensus is based on acts of exclusion'. Whatever the motivation, if sources of disagreement are excluded, and consensus relies on existing hegemonic discursive representation of the problem then systemic change or a potential moment of politics (Rancière, 1999) is precluded. Instead, apparent change is limited to 'policing' (ibid), or what the Council official referred to as 'tweaking the pathways'. Such minor adjustments of the social order enable those involved to gain Lacanian 'enjoyment' from their tangible contribution and avoids the discomfort associated with acknowledging the scale of systemic disadvantage, the disabling impact of ongoing restrictions, or the requirement to develop alternatives. The pragmatic, consensual approach limits apparent solutions to the perceptions of those who currently frame the problem. It also undermines the achievements of the disabled people's movement, including the obligations of the UNCRPD, particularly General Comment 7 for the involvement of disabled people.

The Council's explicit efforts to exclude voices of dissent or lived experience is particularly significant in the context of the Mayoral commitment to 'look at everything', in the quest to understand why two people's pleas for help had been ignored with fateful consequences. This exclusion appears to also have removed the core commitment to action as the taskforce never actually met.

7.5 The impact of resistance to hegemonic contestation

The resistance to hegemonic contestation is not always deliberate. People may be unaware of their role reinforcing the hegemony and resisting contestation. Cultural hegemony is such as to present the potential for influence as requiring collaboration with statutory authorities rather than a horizontal movement of resistance. After the Council meeting (dmas2), a voluntary sector employee reported that:

> It was great to hear chief Council officers... being so receptive to inclusion and equality - lovely work.

In the context of a meeting in which Council officers had expressly rejected the involvement of people with lived experience, her reference to 'inclusion' and 'equality' suggests no expectation of 'a part of those who have no part' (Rancière, 1999, p.11). In contrast, disabled activists and service users explained:

> I feel very disappointed about what happened…dismissive and invalidating response from senior staff.
> The more I think about that meeting, the worse it all feels.
> What happened to, "nothing about us, without us"?

Assuming that all perspectives are shaped by a person's subject position, it is perhaps unsurprising if the subject position of a non-disabled voluntary sector employee lacks awareness of the history and achievements of the disabled people's movement. The problem is not the ignorance (Rancière, 1991) but the exclusion of different perceptions, such that dominant narratives and inequalities inherent to common-sense social logics are reinforced. Cross-party political resistance to contestation of discursive inequalities highlights the hegemonic nature of social logics. Attendees in this meeting were employees of the voluntary sector and a Labour-controlled local authority, ostensibly in opposition to Conservative government policy. Yet, despite expressing active commitment to addressing the problems faced by disabled asylum seekers, these employees ensured that any change was limited to policing a system explicitly designed to restrict access to services and thereby to create a 'hostile environment'.

The vastly different responses to the same meeting may be indicative of the organisational distinctions between the asylum voluntary sector and the disabled people's movement. These are not parallel entities. The disabled people's movement makes a distinction between peer support organisations *of*, and charitable organisations *for*, disabled people. The lack of a similar movement *of* people seeking asylum may be caused by a number of factors, including language barriers, lack of financial means to travel and meet each other, the all-consuming impact of immediate struggles for survival, and migration status being seen as a temporary state rather than a lived identity. This study did not include representatives of organisations *for* disabled people, which might be considered more akin to the asylum voluntary sector. The distinction is important regarding discursive representation of the problem and associated responses. Logics of generosity towards victims of injustice may be the assumed approach of charitable organisations, whereas equality and a 'part for those who have no part' (Rancière 1999) is core to the social model on which the disabled people's movement is based.

There are always multiple possible allegiances which could be sought. Assuming that everybody's perspective is shaped by their subject position, people responsible for designing or implementing current policy and practice can be expected to have limited capacity to envisage counter-hegemonic alternatives. If the purpose is hegemonic contestation, it is nonsensical to prioritise allegiances with the Home Office or statutory authorities. In this example, possible partnership with the disabled people's movement was rejected in favour of the hegemonic stability associated with affirming dominant power relations. It is not new, or exclusive to the asylum sector, for funded organisations to side with those perceived to have the power. Clifford (2020, p.253) writes a stinging critique of disability charities that avoid 'outspoken criticism of the government … in favour of opportunities to work in partnership'. Charities may frame their approach as pragmatic. Effective lobbying may be facilitated by identifying shared values with those we seek to influence. However, the focus on common ground can hinder the development of systemic alternatives. With high pertinence to this example, Clifford (2020, p.257), asks whether collaboration can be justified if it reinforces regressive policy or is that 'a betrayal of all those suffering as victims of that agenda?'. In the example of this

meeting (dmas2), the allegiances of voluntary sector employees felt like an example of such a 'betrayal' in the quest to ensure that contestation remains at the level of policing.

The resistance to hegemonic contestation from people with statutory or voluntary sector positions, highlights the need for a movement of resistance led by people with lived experiences of restriction based on disability, migration status, or wider oppression. I do not argue that anything less than hegemonic contestation and a moment of politics should be automatically rejected. It is undoubtedly necessary to seek any means possible to address the immediacy of people's struggles for survival, irrespective of the lack of hegemonic contestation. However, it is necessary to distinguish between action to mitigate immediate symptoms of injustice and attempts to address causal problems. Pragmatic attempts to present individuals as exceptions, reinforce discursive inequalities and cannot address causal problems. Where hegemonic contestation of systemic inequalities is sought, then the solutions cannot stem from those whose perspective is shaped by the hegemony. It is necessary to bring together the insights of people who currently have little hegemonic impact, building a broader movement of resistance based on respect for the expertise of lived experience of the impact of current policy and practice. Suggested means of contributing to the required hegemonic change will be considered in the next chapter, concluding this study.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed perceived solutions to the injustices associated with disability and forced migration. There are several initiatives ostensibly designed in response to injustices associated with issues of disability in the UK immigration system. The existence of these initiatives may be considered progress. There is undoubtedly increased awareness of the existence of disabled asylum seekers in comparison with the year 2012, when I was told by the receptionist of a major national refugee charity that they do not exist. However, this analysis reveals that these initiatives reflect, reinforce, and even resist contestation of hegemonic discursive restrictions and inequalities.

Perceived solutions must be understood in relation to the perceived problems they seek to address. Home Office initiatives reinforce hegemonic logics of generosity and sufficientarianism. The work is designed to identify those individuals framed as worthy of support and thus enhance, rather than contest, the assumed legitimacy of the wider system. The voluntary sector may assume criticism of the restrictions and inequalities resulting from government policy, but the responses are dominated by logics of pragmatism. Efforts to address people's urgent survival needs may be lifesaving and cannot be criticised as a form of immediate response. Furthermore, those people able to evidence logics of individual responsibility could also benefit from the 'right to work'. The focus of these initiatives is not on contesting the dislocation of rights or on asserting equality, but on mitigating the impact, adjusting the borders of entitlement, and asserting exceptions to the prevailing hegemony. In the context of the long-term and relentless injustices of the asylum and immigration

system, combined with the funding concerns of the voluntary sector, it may be understandable that the focus is on pragmatic change rather than hegemonic contestation. Most significantly perhaps, this analysis finds resistance to wider hegemonic contestation. Despite espoused commitment to change, employees from the asylum voluntary sector and local authority protect hegemonic power relations and the assumed location of expertise, while undermining the achievements of the disabled people's movement including the UNCRPD.

Any action is necessarily contingent on the perceived scope for political change. Writing about the injustices experienced by the wider population of disabled people, Hughes (2019, p.843) asserts that current injustice 'did not fall from heaven and cannot be read off from nature. It arises in the welter of social relations from the play of power that gives it shape'. The shift in hegemonic understanding of disability following the development of the social model in the 1970s, discussed in Chapter 1, highlights the inherent contingency of any social order. As a result of campaigning based on the social model, hegemonic presentation of disability changed from an issue of individual tragedy to increasingly become recognised as an issue of collective responsibility (Oliver and Barnes, 2012). Despite clear relevance to the disabling barriers experienced by asylum seekers, this study's analysis indicates that the asylum sector is undermining rather than asserting social model approaches. With the assumed normative value of pragmatism, current initiatives reflect and reinforce hegemonic discourse of vulnerability and individual distinctions of worth, rather than logics of rights and equality. As such, these initiatives maintain the break with Bevan's (1952) rights-based conception of healthcare, reinforcing the discursive distinction between need and entitlement to support, asserted by the 1998 White Paper, which is core to current denial of services.

The assumed value of pragmatic consensus results in attention being focused on technical issues of identification or adjustment within the prevailing hegemony. As such, these initiatives are confined to policing the existing social order. However, in the context of deliberate restrictions and inequalities of entitlement to support, effective change cannot be achieved without disrupting dominant power relations. If the basis for change stems not from the assumed expertise of dominant power relations but from the 'scream' of injustice asserted by people with lived experience, then the necessity for dissensus must be recognised. A new approach is required to disrupt the prevailing orthodoxy.

Effective contestation of the assumed common-sense social logics underpinning hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, relies on learning from the expertise of intersectional lived experience, building on previous achievements and creating a broad-based movement of resistance, solidarity, and equal rights. This would facilitate a Rancièrian moment of politics and the dislocation of hegemonic distinctions of entitlement. Without this level of change, the injustices experienced by some individuals may be adjusted, but the causal inequalities remain unchallenged.

8. Concluding comments and recommendations

> *we must raise awareness that an alternative is possible – one with different forms of human relationships, personal development, and interdependency that we cannot even imagine from the constraints of our current position.*
>
> (Clifford, 2020, p.303)

This study began with the exasperated assertion from a disabled man facing eviction and homelessness, that such removal of support 'makes no sense'. The contributions of people with lived experience of disability and forced migration in Chapter 6 have shown that he is not alone in experiencing systematic restrictions in meeting basic human needs that appear to 'make no sense' other than to reduce life to a struggle for survival. Building on previous academic studies which documented the lack of provision for disabled asylum seekers in the UK (Roberts and Harris, 2002; Ward, Amas and Lagnado, 2008; Yeo and Bolton, 2013), I did not seek to prove the existence of disabled asylum seekers or to document the extent of suffering. Instead, assuming the injustice of these intersectional inequalities, I investigated how hegemonic representations of the needs and entitlements associated with disability and forced migration in the UK are determined, reinforced, or contested.

This final chapter brings together the study's findings and concludes with recommendations targeted at contestation of causal problems as well as symptomatic relief of immediate struggles. As discussed in Chapter 5, I found broad agreement that there is need to address intersectional injustice. The normative value of consensus may be appropriate if problems result from oversight, however, as highlighted in Chapter 4, current inequalities result from deliberate policy and practice. Therefore, my recommendations include contestation in the following areas:

- If the current hegemony reinforces intersectional inequalities, then dissent is needed to achieve the necessary paradigmatic shift.
- Hegemonic assumptions as to the location of knowledge require contestation. The lived experiences of disabled asylum seekers must be central to efforts to understand and address current struggles.
- People facing the direct impact of current inequalities cannot develop alternatives while immediate survival is threatened. There is need for an intersectional movement of collaborative solidarity between disabled citizens, asylum seekers and allies.
- A 'social model of asylum' would build on the 'social model of disability', facilitate understanding and targeting of resistance on the disabling impact of restrictions within the asylum system rather than exclusively on symptoms of injustice.
- Publicly engaged academic research could facilitate understanding and development of the paradigmatic shift required.

Finally, I consider the limitations of this study and suggest the next steps to address the issues raised.

8.1 Summarising the research process and findings

As far as I am aware, this study is unique in the methodological approach taken to studying issues of disability and forced migration. A poststructuralist perspective facilitated focus on the contingency of current social relations, what underpins existing inequalities, and how effective resistance should be targeted to contest the systemic restrictions meeting human needs. This was combined with elements of action research, in the quest to ensure that the research methods themselves contribute to building a broader movement of resistance. Centring the lived experiences of disabled asylum seekers, I brought people involved with the disabled peoples movement and the asylum sector into conversation with each other, to learn from each other and to develop more effective alternatives to contemporary intersectional inequalities. Taking a retroductive approach, I sought to develop my hypothesis and interrogate my own assumptions as the study progressed. This enables reflections as to the contributions made by this study towards policy, practice, and theoretical knowledge.

In this study, I drew on academic literature from the broad disciplines of disability studies, migration studies and intersectionality. Taking a poststructuralist approach, and elements of the Essex school of discourse theory, I analysed the social, political and fantasmatic logics (Glynos and Howarth, 2007) underpinning representations of disability and forced migration. This approach to discourse analysis highlights the contingency of any social order. If existing inequalities appear inevitable, this reveals how hegemonic assumptions and structures have obscured alternatives, not that alternatives do not exist. As part of this study, I worked with disabled asylum seekers to take their perspectives and insights to a wider audience, including representatives of disabled people's organisations, the asylum sector, trade unions, local and national government. I do not claim that my approach has changed the scale of injustice, however, I have contributed to raising the profile of current intersectional experiences and to bringing the disabled peoples movement and the asylum sector into conversation with each other. I contend that this conversation needs to continue, in order to learn from historical developments in both sectors and to develop more effective alternatives to intersectional inequalities. I will summarise the contribution to knowledge resulting from the different components of the study before turning more specifically to my recommendations for change.

Chapter 4

This first analytical chapter focused on investigating the dominant discursive struggles determining government policies regarding the restrictions and inequalities of entitlement imposed on people with intersectional experiences of disability and forced migration. I began by briefly considering the historical context. The rights-based logics of the post-World War Two era have been dislocated from contemporary immigration discourse. Instead, an appearance of contestation is focused on adjusting the balance between political logics of discretionary generosity towards migrants framed as worthy, and logics of control of the wider migrant population from whom citizens should be defended. Discourse of generosity is complemented by fantasmatic logics of pride, whereby support to refugees is framed

as if a sign of UK largesse rather than an international obligation to fellow human beings. Meanwhile, logics of defence are complemented by fantasmatic logics of the threat posed by refugees, drawing on pejorative reference to 'swarms' or 'floods'. This discourse is underpinned by uncontested social logics assuming the prime legitimacy of the nation-state and economic gain. Analysis focused primarily on the White Paper, 'Fairer, faster and firmer' (1998), which removed entitlement for asylum seekers to access the welfare state, and the VPRS (2014) which provided support to people selected as worthy of resettlement. The former was introduced by New Labour and the latter by the coalition government of Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties. This cross-party discourse highlights the political consensus shaping immigration policy.

The removal of services and support necessary to meet human needs creates an asylum system which is acutely and deliberately disabling. The social model of disability would provide useful analysis of this impact, yet it is rarely applied to discourse of immigration. Instead, my analysis highlights how hegemonic developments of immigration policy gradually extended to impact on disabled citizens. I argue that the increasingly hegemonic status of the social model of disability at the start of the New Labour government (Oliver and Barnes, 2012) prevented the restrictions imposed on asylum seekers being extended to disabled citizens at this time.

The historical development of discourse regarding disability progressed differently from that of immigration, however, contemporary discourse is not dissimilar, with distinctions of entitlement and explicit restrictions for those framed as unworthy. The discursive shifts facilitating removal of entitlement from disabled citizens developed more gradually than regarding immigration policy. Analysis of disability discourse began with then Prime Minister Tony Blair's Beveridge lecture (1999), in which he called for claimants to take individual responsibility, thereby contesting political logics of rights which had been central to overt discourse of the welfare state. His vision is reflected in later welfare reform. Adopting the language of the disabled people's movement, the 2006 White Paper promoted the need for individual service users to have 'choice and control'. This ostensibly progressive discourse facilitated a shift in responsibility from the state to a greater plethora of service providers, with normative focus on individual responsibility. This discursive shift was a precursor for the welfare reforms (2010) introduced following the financial crash of 2008. With increasing commonalities to discourse of immigration more than a decade earlier, these reforms framed the problem as the burden on public finances posed by irresponsible 'scroungers' (Garthwaite, 2011) reliant on state services, with the solution presented as cuts to state support. The contemporary experiences of disabled asylum seekers must be understood in the context of the increasing convergence of policy discourse regarding immigration and disability.

Chapters 5 and 6

Attention then turned to examine how hegemonic representations of the needs and entitlements of disabled asylum seekers and refugees are reflected, reinforced, or contested? Chapter 5 focused on the perspectives of people with diverse roles

regarding implementation of formal and informal entitlements. Chapter 6 then turned to the perspectives of people with lived experience of the impact of existing restrictions and inequalities.

My analysis found remarkable consistency in perspectives. Hegemonic common-sense social logics frame non-disabled citizens as the 'normal' (Link, 2006) with prime legitimacy, thereby assuming disabled asylum seekers among the 'other'. Overt debate thereby becomes pre-limited to adjusting the criteria of entitlement to political logics of discretionary generosity or individual responsibility, with the dislocation of rights and collective responsibility left largely uncontested. This study was designed to privilege the perspectives of people with lived experience of disability and forced migration. However, it was found that when access to support for basic human needs relies on being framed as exceptionally worthy, then disabled asylum seekers may be unable to contest the hegemony. For these reasons, the struggle for justice may rely on the solidarity of allies living in less immediately precarious circumstances.

Chapter 7

This final chapter investigated how representations of the problem, analysed in Chapters 4-6, frame current responses (Bacchi, 2009), and how more fundamental political contestation might be achieved. Analysis focused on current and proposed initiatives, as well as response to events organised as part of this study. I grouped responses to the perceived problems according to those seeking to reinforce, adjust or contest the hegemony. Home Office initiatives are designed to more efficiently police hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, distinguishing between those who are worthy of generosity and those from whom defence is required. Such efforts are not designed to address disabling restrictions and inequalities but, as the ICIBI report (Bolt, 2019) asserts, to reinforce the credibility of the UK immigration system.

Voluntary sector contributors may assume criticism of the Home Office, however, fatalistic perceptions of the impossibility of change result in normative conceptions of pragmatism. The focus becomes on adjusting, rather than contesting, hegemonic borders of entitlement or asserting logics of rights. If wider policy is assumed to be intractable, then any action can be framed as sufficient. Mitigating the impact of current policies and identifying individuals framed as exceptionally worthy may be essential to people's immediate survival, however, such an approach evokes logics of generosity within the broader context of logics of defence. The hegemony of dominant policy discourse is thereby reinforced rather than contested.

The disabled people's movement has many experiences and achievements regarding the social construction of inequalities which are relevant to the asylum sector. However, the discursive disjuncture between the two sectors is reinforced by initiatives such as the asylum sector campaign for the 'right to work' (Lift the Ban, 2020) at a time when the disabled people's movement is campaigning against the conditionality of benefits and being forced to seek paid work (see for example: Peev, 2010; Grover and Piggott, 2013). The 'Lift the Ban' campaign asserts the potential advantages to the taxpayer, thereby reinforcing the notion that those without paid

work are a burden. This approach may be framed as pragmatic, but it obscures the radical contingency of the social order and hinders the development of a broader movement of resistance. Contestation becomes limited to what Rancière (1999) describes as policing, rather than systemic change and a moment of politics. Fatalistic understanding of the social order thereby becomes self-fulfilling.

My analysis then turned to consider response to attempted contestation of hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, bringing together the disabled people's movement and the asylum sector. Despite the stated commitment from voluntary sector and local authority representatives to address the restrictions faced by disabled asylum seekers, there was active resistance to hegemonic contestation. Instead, service providers asserted the need for adjustments, such as to identify individuals considered worthy exceptions to current restrictions. Voluntary sector contributors assumed the need for prime collaboration with statutory providers, foregrounding the assumed normative value of pragmatism and consensus. As such, hegemonic discursive inequalities are maintained, the disabling impact of current restrictions is obscured, and possible systemic contestation, or a moment of politics, is averted.

This study has highlighted the precarity experienced by disabled asylum seekers struggling to meet basic human needs in the UK. Despite broad consensus among contributors to this research that these struggles are unjust and therefore that change in policy and practice is required, current initiatives reinforce or adjust, but fail to contest, systemic inequalities. Initiatives focused on consensual adjustment rather than contestation might be productive if current restrictions and inequalities were based on oversight. However, intersectional disadvantage stems, at least in part, from deliberate restrictions, underpinned by social logics prioritising economically productive, non-disabled citizens. These logics and the resultant hegemonic distinctions of entitlement must therefore be contested if inequalities are to be addressed. Notwithstanding the scale of change that is needed, awareness of the contingency of the current social order is an essential precursor to the development of alternatives.

Before reflecting on what I perceive as missing from the perspectives of those contributing to this study and on what is required to address intersectional injustice, it is necessary to reflect on my own assumptions. Taking a retroductive approach, I do not apologise for developing and adapting my hypotheses as the research progressed. With the recognition that everybody's perspective is inevitably limited by cultural hegemony and the limitations of a subject position, I seek to overtly interrogate my changing assumptions.

8.2 Retroductive reflections

My initial hypothesis had been that assumptions and structures which prioritise majority interests result in no sector addressing the needs of people perceived as minorities. However, during this study, it became apparent to me that on some occasions, minorities are prioritised as exceptionally worthy. People labelled as 'vulnerable' or as victims of torture may be framed as having greater legitimacy to

support than the wider population of disabled people seeking sanctuary. Therefore, although minority status may impact on the priority given to addressing the barriers faced by disabled people, I reject this as a principal explanation of the injustices experienced.

The assumed value of rights-based solutions

My assumption that the problems faced by disabled asylum seekers stem from lack of rights afforded to people perceived as having minority status, resulted in framing the solution as the assertion of these rights. However, the reader may have become aware of some confusion regarding my analysis of the discursive role of rights-based logics. This reflects my own unresolved perspective as to preferred solutions, combined with what I perceive as shifting hegemonic discourse.

The pursuit of hegemony is never static or complete. The analysis in Chapter 4 shows that following World War Two, logics of rights took on a normative and foundational role, which I attribute with the status of social logics. However, the example of welfare reform policies (2010) highlights how in the context of an increasingly hegemonic neoliberal agenda (Harvey, 2007), discourse of rights shifted to become a political logic of overt debate. Rights became positioned as if balanced against responsibilities, with growing credence given to the idea that the assertion of rights hinders the central quest for profit maximisation. In this context, pursuit of rights appears counter-hegemonic. However, just as I am now unconvinced that the denial of minority rights is the core problem, I now also question whether the assertion of rights could solve the injustices associated with disability and forced migration. Instead, having analysed the discursive underpinnings of current injustices, I now suggest that normative pursuit of rights may simply adjust the balance within hegemonic discursive political logics of rights and responsibilities. Further, the quest for rights risks exaggerating the significance of legality in addressing the structural inequalities of capitalism. As discussed in Chapter 7 the campaign for the 'right to work' reinforces hegemonic discursive distinctions and the capitalist association between paid work and human worth. As such, discursive representation of rights can become a fantasmatic logic, which makes political logics 'compelling' (Glynos, Klimecki and Willmott, 2012, p.299), rather than contesting hegemonic relations of inequality. Drawing on Rancière (1999), it may be that logics of rights divert contestation to policing the social order, thereby hindering a moment of politics. Without contestation of systemic inequalities, the quest to achieve the right to some support may provide the illusion of progress without enabling an equal part for those with no part (ibid).

My perceptions and political understanding are inevitably shaped by my positionality and my absorption of hegemonic discourse. It is, therefore, important to subject my conclusions to reflexive scrutiny. The normative value of 'rights-based solutions', was an unchallenged focus of my role in the voluntary sector during the New Labour government. I now perceive that focus as limited by my subject position and hegemonic perspectives of possibility. According to Oliver (2002, p.14), this realisation is the purpose of research:

> the research act is not an attempt to change the world through investigation but rather an attempt to change the world by producing ourselves and others in differing ways from those we have produced before, intentionally, or not.

Leading activists (Finkelstein, 2007; Oliver, M. and Barnes, 2012; UPIAS, 2018; Clifford, 2020) in the disabled people's movement always focused on contesting the causes of disablement inherent in capitalist socio-economic relations, rather than on asserting rights within the dominant social order. As Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.5) write, 'ultimately only the transformation of capitalist society will ensure the full inclusion of disabled people and indeed all socially oppressed groups'. They attribute the demise of the impact of the disabled people's movement as being due, in part, to having acquiesced to a 'rights route to emancipation and equality' as a condition of 'incorporation into mainstream politics' (Oliver and Barnes, 2012, p.5) of the New Labour government. I had not previously absorbed the criticisms of rights-based solutions, perhaps because this created uncomfortable dissonance with my work in the voluntary sector promoting the rights of disabled people.

The limitations of what Oliver and Barnes (ibid) refer to as a 'rights route' regarding disability are equally applicable to the barriers faced by people on account of migration status. Refugees have rights under national and international law. However, the discursive development of rights has been somewhat distinct in the immigration sector. Perhaps the rights of refugees always had lower precedence. The 1951 Convention focuses on the '*status* of refugees', whereas the 2006 Convention focuses on the '*rights* of persons with disabilities'. Logics of rights are not apparent among hegemonic political logics determining contemporary entitlements of immigrants in the UK. Instead, contemporary political logics on this issue, focus public discourse to balancing generosity and defence. In this context, the assertion of rights may appear radical, and would certainly reduce the precarity associated with the quest to be perceived worthy of generosity, but it is not a foundational logic. If entitlement to support were based on logics of rights, it would not automatically contest the social logics, whereby lack of economic productivity is perceived as a burden. Provision based on rights might lessen precarity but does not constitute the assertion of an equal part for those with no part.

The central role of lived experience

Adopting the precept of the disabled people's movement, my original perception was that any solution should be led by people with lived experience: 'Nothing about us, without us'. I had assumed that disabled asylum seekers should have a leading role in the development of alternatives. However, as das11 asserted, people struggling with immediate survival need to manage the system and are therefore not well placed to lead contestation. Nonetheless, my analysis found that a key distinction between the contributions of people with lived experience and that of wider contributors is the 'scream' (Holloway, 2002) of injustice, whereby disabled asylum seekers assert the need for change, beyond the pragmatic focus of other contributors. Das8 called for the wider population to recognise that:

> we are human beings, and they should treat us how they would like to be treated… they should know that the pain that they can feel is the same, same pain that we are feeling.

Her ostensibly obvious assertion is also a radical contestation of the social logics on which distinctions of entitlement are based. She did not call for gifts or minority rights, nor did she frame herself as an exception, instead she called for acknowledgement of shared humanity. Her assertions were core to my realisation that a rights-based approach fails to address systemic inequality. As referenced in Chapter 3, her initial condition for involvement in this study was that she would do so as my teacher, not my participant. From my perspective, that is the role she played, and should play, in the development of alternatives.

8.3 Recommended action to contest current intersectional injustice

Having analysed diverse perspectives of the problems and solutions to the intersectional injustices associated with disability and forced migration, I conclude with a series of recommendations for action, based on what I consider missing from current initiatives. The 'silences' (Bacchi and Goodwin, 2016, p.20), or what is left unproblematised, limit hegemonic perceptions of appropriate solutions and are therefore as significant as what forms the agenda for discussion. As Albert Einstein famously warned: 'we cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them'. Effective solutions to the restrictions and inequalities associated with disability and asylum cannot be developed with the same discursive logics as created the problems. The paradigmatic shift required to build intersectional justice requires collaborative learning and actions of solidarity between disabled citizens, asylum seekers and allies.

There is a need to balance achievable short-term change to provide immediate improvement to people's lives, with the need to contest the causal problems. I do not doubt the importance of immediate relief, however it cannot be confused with causal solutions. Furthermore, there is an ethical responsibility to be clear as to what is realisable in what time period. Das8 described her anger and disappointment that a campaign to 'close down Yarl's Wood' immigration removal centre, was framed as successful by organisers and yet failed in its overt, and for her the only meaningful aim. The result was to add an additional burden of disappointment to her mental health, creating resistance to further action.

There is a difficulty in creating campaign objectives that meet everyone's priorities. The buzz of organising a large protest at Yarl's Wood may appear successful to some people, and irrelevant to others. Similarly, when organising events to bring people together, one asylum seeker pushed for the goal to be police reform. I am unconvinced by this goal but in my research diary on 19th January 2018, I ask 'Who am I to say?'. I have no greater right to determine the objective than anyone else, but I am unwilling to put time and energy into a goal that I am unconvinced by. The quest to agree effective and realisable objectives is not simple. A voluntary sector contributor helping to organise, stated that it would be a success if 'one person

changed their views'. In my research diary of 13th January 2018, I question this, writing 'What would that achieve?'. Unless this 'one person' was in a position of great power, their views would not alter distinctions of entitlement. It is impossible to be certain as to what will result from different forms of action. To address the intersectional injustice discussed in this thesis, action to address the immediate symptoms of intersectional struggles for survival must be combined with contestation of causal inequalities.

My recommendations include action to address the causes and the symptoms of current injustice. Firstly, I contend that dissent is needed to build the necessary systemic change. Secondly, effective action to address the immediacy of people's needs must respect and learn from the expertise of intersectional lived experience. This requires challenging dominant assumptions regarding the location of knowledge. However, people struggling for survival cannot be expected to lead the development of intersectional alternatives. If contestation is to be effective, solidarity is needed to overcome the precarity associated with disability and forced migration. My third recommendation is therefore for collaborative learning and solidarity between disabled citizens, asylum seekers and allies to create a broad-based movement of resistance and solidarity. This would enable responses to bring together and build on wider achievements, thereby avoiding the current tendency to frame intersectional action as if taking place in an ahistorical vacuum and automatically innovative. These recommendations are integral elements of the fourth, to develop a social model of asylum which draws on the social model of disability to focus contestation on the disabling impact of current restrictions. This would also help to bring the sectors together and promote solidarity. Finally, these action-based recommendations are combined with an important role for publicly engaged academic research to develop the paradigmatic shift required.

i. **Dissensus needed to contest hegemonic, common-sense, social logics underpinning distinctions of entitlement.**

The current normative approach to consensus cannot contest hegemonic restrictions and inequalities enshrined in government policy. Contestation cannot be limited to adjusting the balance of political logics to mitigate the suffering of certain people but must consider the social logics underpinning the existence of distinctions of entitlement. The normative value of consensus assumes a broad common purpose. However, as my analysis has highlighted, government policy is explicitly designed to restrict migrant access to services and support. The purpose of distinctions of entitlement is to deter people from coming to, or remaining in, the UK (see for example, Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999; Immigration Act, 2014, 2016). These goals are underpinned by social logics assuming the prime legitimacy of non-disabled citizens, and the paramount need to reduce the burden posed by the 'other' on the over-riding objective of profit maximisation. Lived experiences of the disabling impact of the resultant barriers to meeting human needs were outlined in Chapter 6. The causes of current injustice cannot be addressed without contesting the assumed purpose and priorities of immigration policy. This is incompatible with normative assumptions of consensus.

Some mitigation of the symptoms of injustice experienced by certain people may be achieved by consensus. However, as I have argued, initiatives based on selecting people framed as worthy of support, reinforce hegemonic distinctions of entitlement. To address the systemic causes requires dissent. As Rancière (2010, p.46) explains, dissensus is the 'essence of politics'. It functions to put 'one world in another' and thereby to demonstrate 'a gap in the sensible' (ibid). Yet, hegemonic assumptions of the normative value of consensus were clearly apparent in the solutions proposed by contributors to this study and the responses to attempted contestation (dmas1,2). When organising the public event, dmas1, I was advised by an employee of an asylum voluntary sector organisation, not to involve one disabled asylum seeker because she gets angry. Bell hooks (1996, p.12) argues that white people being 'unable to hear black rage' results in the rage remaining 'trapped in the realm of the unspeakable'. She refers to the silencing of rage as the 'sacrificial offering' made to 'gain the ear of white listeners' (1996, p.13). Without the anger of dissenting voices, the liberal democratic façade of consensus may be maintained, and systemic causes of injustice obscured. Avoidance of political 'intervention in the visible and the sayable' (Rancière, 2010, p.45) limits debate to policing, or the 'partition of the sensible' (ibid), thereby reinforcing the 'common-sense' hegemonic consensus. The normative appeal of pragmatic consensus and stability thereby becomes an impediment to addressing injustice.

An individual's statement of benign intent is insufficient to contest systemic inequalities. Distinctions of entitlement are core to the socio-economic relations of capitalism, creating what Bauman (2004) refers to as 'wasted lives' alongside 'wasted products'. Returning to the opening citation:

> There are always too many of them. 'Them' are the fellows of whom there should be fewer – or better still none at all. And there are never enough of 'Us'. 'Us' are the folks of whom there should be more. (Bauman, 2004, p.34)

Neoliberal reduction of state services and increased focus on individual responsibility (Harvey, 2007), exacerbate the impact of the prioritisation of profit. If the problem is systemic, the solution cannot be to identify a select number of 'them' considered worthy of support, to adjust the borders between 'them' and 'us', or to pragmatically seek consensus. Such efforts do not contest the break between need and entitlement to support, or the existence of divisions of assumed human worth.

Current initiatives focus on adjusting the balance of political logics within an apparently intractable system. Social logics assuming the primacy of economically productive, non-disabled, citizens underpin hegemonic distinctions of entitlement, yet these logics remain uncontested. Contestation of systemic causes requires shifting the focus from identifying 'vulnerable' asylum seekers, framed as having 'exceptional needs', to focus instead on asserting core assumptions of equality and solidarity (Lahusen and Grasso, 2018). Attention directed at overcoming disabling barriers meeting human needs would highlight what Arendt (1963, p.94) refers to as the common 'quest for bread' and thereby facilitate awareness of commonalities with the wider population. Contestation of social logics that associate human worth with economic contribution requires dissensus from the hegemony.

Systemic contestation relies on perceiving the possibility of change, imagining alternatives beyond hegemonic common-sense and having the capacity to contest the dominant orthodoxy. If the scope for change is limited to pragmatic consensus with the dominant hierarchy, then the development of alternatives to the hegemony is precluded. The capacity to envisage alternatives may be limited by cultural hegemony. However, beyond this, the capacity for contestation is limited by a person's roles and responsibilities. Home Office civil servants are employed to administer, not contest, government policy. Similarly, voluntary sector employees may be constrained by organisational needs for funding or collaboration with statutory service providers or policymakers. As such, these organisations depend on the social order and without proactive attempts to overcome such limitations, may be a hindrance to a moment of politics in which people with no part assert their part (Rancière, 1999). Instead, collaborative alliances of solidarity are required, to build a broader movement of dissensus.

ii. Centring the expertise stemming from intersectional lived experience

Understanding the immediacy of intersectional struggles for survival requires centring the lived experiences of disabled asylum seekers. It may be commonly assumed that women's understanding and experiences must be central to responses to sexism, and people with lived experience of racism must be central to anti-racist solutions. Similarly, the expertise of experience has been central to the disabled people's movement as advocated by numerous disability studies academics and activists (including Oliver 1983, Oliver and Barnes 2012, Clifford 2020). The events organised as part of this study were a means to enable people with wider roles to learn from the expertise of disabled asylum seekers. Addressing intersectional injustice is inseparable from respecting the expertise derived from lived experience of current policy and practice.

In academic research, changes in epistemological assumptions as to what constitutes knowledge results in different methodological approaches and consequently also different research findings. In terms of public discourse, when access barriers are addressed and the expertise of lived experience is respected, the nature of debate is transformed. It appears as if systemic change is impossible when the dominant perspectives, methods and assumptions remain constant. When different voices and perspectives are heard and respected, then alternative methods of organising and distributing resources not only appear possible but are actively created.

The expertise of disabled asylum seekers is essential to successful dissensus. Building on the analysis in Chapter 6, to realise the contribution of people with these lived experiences, it is necessary to overcome the precarity of people's struggles for survival. Furthermore, a shift in the assumed location of knowledge is needed, to contest what Fricker (2007) refers to as 'epistemic injustice' or what Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) refers to as 'epistemicide'. If expertise is assumed to be associated with power, then the insights of marginalised people are systematically subdued. The detrimental impact of excluding the expertise stemming from lived experience of disability, or what (Johnson and McRuer, 2014) refer to as 'crip-

specific knowledge', is not confined exclusively to those who are subjugated. The knowledge developed out of lived experience of disabling systems, as Ana Bê (2019, p.16) argues, could 'be beneficial to others'. Without this input, as Oliver (2018) warns, in what was to be his final extended interview, non-disabled people routinely 'get it wrong'. References to the need for statistics to address the lack of existing knowledge regarding disability and migration (Crock, Ernst and Ao, 2012; Burns, 2017) provides clear example of the impact of subjugating 'crip-specific knowledge' (Johnson and McRuer, 2014). This study adopted methodology with strong focus on relational work, particularly with people with lived experience of disability and forced migration. This approach is counter to dominant assumptions of the location of expertise. None of the asylum seekers contributing to this research called for better statistics, nor did they lament the lack of knowledge. This is not to argue that people with lived experience automatically have the solutions or the opportunity to develop alternatives. As I have argued, cultural hegemony is such that people may adopt hegemonic perspectives, irrespective of their subject position. For example, I suggest that das8 adopts hegemonic assumptions regarding the location of power, when she calls for prioritising the influencing of the 'big giants' (Yeo and Spencer, 2018). She believed that events designed to build organisations of peer-support were pointless without the attendance of people with decision-making power. The expertise of people with lived experience is essential to long-term change, but people struggling for survival must prioritise immediate survival needs. For these reasons, bonds of solidarity which may be built through relational work are essential to contesting the current system.

Practical access barriers

Beyond epistemic barriers, practical access barriers must be addressed to enable meaningful contributions from disabled asylum seekers. These barriers compound the struggles for survival and prevent people devoting energy to the development of systemic alternatives (das11). The challenge is to create conditions whereby people living in precarious circumstances can contribute their expertise, without jeopardising their struggles for survival. As explained in Chapter 6, some people are more enthusiastic than others about becoming involved in peer support organisations. I noted in my journal that das16 showed:

> much more clear-cut interest than other people so far, which is interesting in that he is far less obviously disabled than others and could avoid the label 'disabled' if he wanted to.

He showed me evidence of his torture scars as if asserting his legitimacy to be involved as a disabled person. He clearly has strong interest in peer support. However, the scope for interaction in wider social settings is limited by language barriers. Interpreters are therefore essential to building solidarity and enabling the expertise of lived experience to be shared.

Without addressing physical, emotional and communication barriers, it will be difficult for others to learn from the experiences of disabled asylum seekers. The budgetary implications of overcoming access barriers are unlikely to be prioritised

by wider organisations unless the involvement of disabled asylum seekers is valued. The disabled people's movement uses online tools to overcome physical access barriers, particularly in the context of the Covid pandemic. Online meetings may overcome mobility access barriers for some, but the internet is particularly inaccessible to people living in destitution, including many asylum seekers. Nonetheless, as Clifford (2020, p.307) writes:

> Having members with diverse skills and abilities who face diverse barriers requires a collective effort that is refreshingly interdependent within an increasingly individualistic society.

As such, finding means to address the diversity of existing barriers can serve to contest the logics of individual responsibility which contribute to the discursive rationale for current restrictions. If practical access barriers associated with disability and asylum were addressed, the sense of feeling unwelcome or of being disregarded, discussed in Chapter 6, could be reduced.

Lack of organisations with specific responsibility for addressing intersectional barriers may hinder wider awareness of people's needs. As discussed in Chapter 6, das11 recalls her intersectional needs being framed as a reason for nobody to acknowledge responsibility for service provision. The problem stems in part from the complexity of immigration policy and welfare reform. This would be vastly simplified if entitlement were dependent on human need. The need to identify people considered worthy of support and the need to develop categories of entitlement would become redundant. Such change would dislocate common-sense social logics of the primacy of the nation-state and economic contribution. In the current hegemony, such change may appear naïvely unrealistic, but the collective responsibility on which the NHS (Bevan, 1952) was founded, exemplifies the contingency of the social order. Effective contestation of hegemonic social logics cannot however be achieved by policymakers and service providers dependent on the power relations of the existing social order. Instead, a moment of politics (Rancière, 1999) and a part for those with no part would be required.

iii. An intersectional movement of resistance and solidarity

Collaborative learning and solidarity are needed to develop alternatives to the hegemony. This is particularly urgent in the context of the extension of restrictions from the asylum sector to a wider 'war on disabled people' (Clifford, 2020). Building such a movement would bring together disabled citizens, asylum seekers and allies to challenge these intersectional inequalities. It would involve: acknowledging and challenging the disabling nature of societal restrictions (Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS), 1976); challenging the 'citizenship assumption' (Pisani, 2012), which obscured the need for resistance when the rights of disabled asylum seekers were removed in 1999; and acknowledging commonalities with a wider population experiencing systematic precarity (Standing, 2014). Writer and trainer, Vikki Reynolds (2014, p.145) aligns her work with activists striving for a movement of resistance, based on 'horizontally linked, non-hierarchical forms of social organization, thought, and communication'. Her conception borrows

from the philosophical notion of the underground power through which rhizomatic plants gain their strength. The power of rhizomes is described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987, p.7) as 'ceaselessly established connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances'. Such conceptions of power could unite people beyond divisions of identity.

The experiences of disabled asylum seekers could bring intersectional insights to support contestation of ongoing hegemonic and systemic injustices. However, in the absence of regular interaction between disability and immigration sectors, acknowledgement of intersectionality becomes framed as if a new discovery, disconnected from the broader asylum system, or the history and achievements of the disabled people's movement. The voluntary sector may be impeded from contesting the hegemony or prioritising alliances with the disabled people's movement. However, there have been successful moments of contestation without voluntary sector support. As discussed in Chapter 6, despite active discouragement from a voluntary sector organisation whose funding relied on promoting 'voluntary return', das11 resisted eviction and the removal of support, eventually gaining refugee status. She did this by bringing together activists from the disabled people's movement and the asylum sector. In so doing, she highlighted the capacity for successful resistance and contestation of hegemonic discursive distinctions of entitlement, through combining the learning and achievements of the two sectors.

The barriers impeding the building of an intersectional movement are not unique to these issues. Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.175) argue that alliances are necessary to address the causes of oppression while maintaining the value of the knowledge, expertise, and peer support of the disabled people's movement. Focusing on the experiences of trafficked women, Sharma also asserts the need for feminists 'to contest global practices of exploitation and abuse' through intersectional resistance and solidarity:

> Feminists intent on securing social justice therefore need to make central to their praxis, the elimination of all immigration controls and the eradication of those sets of social relations organised through global capitalism. (2005, p.106)

While agreeing with her premise of the need for such solidarity and shared learning, there are multiple barriers faced by oppressed people seeking to create alliances. As Mouffe (1988, p.42) explains, 'there is no automatic allegiance between different struggles against oppressive discourses'. Nonetheless, as she also asserts, radical democracy requires the linking of expertise and experience from diverse forms of struggle. This would create 'new subject-positions that would allow the common articulation, for example, of anti-racism, anti-sexism, and anti-capitalism' (ibid). She does not refer explicitly to disability and migration; however, her analysis is very pertinent. Without access to alternative discursive representations, it is unsurprising if people in the asylum sector assume hegemonic discursive representation of disability, locating the problem at the level of the individual disabled person. Similarly, the disabled people's movement relies on wider input to contest hegemonic prioritisation of citizens. Without this intersectional exchange, initiatives are unlikely to avoid reinforcing the hegemony.

iv. A social model of asylum

The most fundamental and urgent recommendation from this study is my call for a social model of asylum. Such a model would shift current focus from apparently pragmatic adjustment of the criteria for distinctions of entitlement. Instead, it would facilitate understanding and contestation of the disabling impact of the asylum system on those subject to restrictions on the ability to meet human needs. The experiences and achievements of the disabled people's movement could facilitate the building of peer support, overcome barriers based on migration status, and provide highly relevant contestation to the disabling impact of the immigration system. It is necessary to build a movement of solidarity, which recognises the commonalities of oppression resulting from a social order constructed to maximise capitalist goals of profit. As Russell and Malhotra (2002, p.216) assert, 'those seeking to challenge capitalism in other struggles', including 'socialists, union activists or academics', could learn useful lessons from the disabled people's movement. Home Office and asylum voluntary sector attempts to identify 'vulnerable' asylum seekers, or to mitigate the suffering of certain individuals, are clearly not seeking to 'challenge capitalism'. Instead, they are perceiving the injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers as specific incidents resulting from oversights.

Effective resistance cannot be achieved by separate battles against each manifestation of capitalist and neoliberal restrictions and inequalities. Barnes argues that the politics of disablement:

> like racism, sexism, hetero-sexism, and all other forms of social oppression, it is a human creation. It is impossible therefore to confront one type of oppression without confronting them all and of course the cultural values that created and sustained them. (1996, p.ix)

The barriers to an effective broad-based movement of resistance are not only from liberals and those on the right of politics. As Clifford (2020, p.298) argues, 'probably the majority of people on the left (and the right) hold ideas about disability that align with an ideology of individualism as opposed to a social model approach to disability'. Hegemonic discourse frames disabled people as incapable or as a burden. Attempts to provide for people's needs are thereby framed as if a mark of progressive politics. In common with Clifford and Barnes, I argue that addressing barriers to the inclusion of disabled people is not simply an issue of justice, but a means of learning from relevant achievements and experiences required for effective contestation of the hegemony.

While promoting the expertise of the disabled people's movement, the shortcomings cannot be ignored. There was a lack of organised resistance from disabled people, when asylum seekers lost the right to access the welfare state in 1999, and when a reservation excluding immigration policy was added to the UNCRPD by the UK government. The failure of the disabled people's movement to contest such developments may have stemmed from lack of awareness of issues beyond lived experience. In the absence of direct contact across sectors, access to information

is limited to media coverage, compounded by what udc2 described as people's ongoing, individual struggles. Furthermore, the disabled people's movement is not immune to the impact of cultural hegemony and social logics assuming the prime legitimacy of citizens. Irrespective of the cause, this failure to contest injustice, enabled distinctions of assumed human worth and a discursive break between needs and entitlements, which were eventually extended to disabled citizens.

Systemic change may appear unattainable, however, bringing together the experiences and achievements of the disabled people's movement with those of the asylum sector, could create a movement of resistance capable of far-reaching political change. It is not only disabled asylum seekers who could benefit from such collaboration. Clifford (2020, p.299) calls for 'engaging in active struggle alongside non-disabled people', in order to:

> make new alliances and to push a social model understanding of disability onto the mainstream agenda… it is also about being involved in building a wider movement that is strong in order to win a society that is free from all oppressions.

Rather than the asylum sector learning from the successful resistance and hegemonic contestation which resulted in the hegemonic acceptance of the social model, the asylum sector is currently at the forefront of the dislocation of the logics of rights. Instead, intersectional injustices could provide the momentum for a moment of politics which could facilitate contestation of the impact of wider oppression.

v. Publicly engaged academic research focussed on developing the paradigmatic shift required.

Recommendations for action to address intersectional injustice could be facilitated by publicly engaged academic research. The innovative methodological approach of this study combined rigorous academic study with publicly engaged activism, and a strong focus on building relations of solidarity through the research process. I drew on, and brought together, different sectors, academic disciplines, and theoretical models. This approach could facilitate the paradigmatic shift required to build intersectional justice. I will outline the potential of the different elements of my methodological contribution.

The events that I organised brought together people from different sectors and different walks of life. Activists, academics, and allies who do not routinely interact, converged to learn from the experiences of disabled asylum seekers and to seek to address the associated injustices. In this way, people whose voices are rarely heard by the mainstream establishment became the lynchpin with which both to develop better understanding and to build a stronger movement for change. As argued above, the social order may appear intractable if the dominant voices are uncontested. However, revolutionary systemic change becomes a possibility that is actively created when access barriers are removed, and the lived experiences of previously marginalised voices are heard and respected.

My methodological approach brought together academic literature from the areas of disability studies, migration, and intersectionality. These distinct areas of study provide important insights for addressing the injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers. The social model of disability involved academic and activist contributions, resulting in a paradigmatic shift which shapes the contemporary discipline of Disability Studies. The development and promotion of a social model of asylum would build on these achievements, as well as those from studies of migration and intersectionality.

My work also drew on distinct theoretical models. I drew particularly on the work of disability activists and academics (including: Oliver, 1983; Finkelstein, 2007; Oliver and Barnes, 2012; Clifford, 2020). These writers take a historical materialist approach, arguing that disability is a product of capitalism and that justice cannot be achieved in isolation from contesting the capitalist roots. I concur with these conclusions, however, using poststructural discourse theory, I have sought to understand the discursive roots of current inequalities. I argue that effective contestation of material inequalities requires dislocation of discursive roots. As discussed in Chapter 4, former Prime Minister Tony Blair did not immediately impose the welfare reform which he advocated in 1999, despite imposing broadly similar restrictions on asylum seekers at this time (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999). A shift in hegemonic understanding of disability was required before similar policies would be imposed on citizens. The New Labour government's co-option of demands from the disabled people's movement for 'choice and control' facilitated a discursive shift from the collective responsibility of the social model, to a neoliberal focus on individual responsibility and reduction of state services. The welfare reform introduced by the Conservative and the Liberal Democrat Coalition was underpinned by the discursive development of the biopsychosocial model. These reforms could not have been tolerated without this discursive shift away from collective responsibility. For these reasons, I argue that poststructuralist discourse theory provides a useful contribution to understanding and contesting the injustices associated with disability and forced migration.

When the focus of contestation is restricted to adjusting the balance between political logics of generosity and defence, the legitimacy of distinctions in human worth is implicitly affirmed. The potential appeal, or Lacanian 'enjoyment' (Stavrakakis, 2005), associated with short-term, achievable relief associated with acts of generosity, may be alluring. However, if attention is continually focused on symptoms, then the relentless nature of battles can reinforce fatalistic perceptions of the social order. Action focused on policing or pragmatic consensus may thereby impede a moment of politics (Rancière, 1999) and the development of a broad-based movement of resistance. Without arguing against work to relieve immediate symptoms of injustice, it is essential to distinguish this from action targeted at the systemic change necessary to address causal problems. Theoretical analysis usefully highlights this distinction.

The merging of academic and activist ambitions in my research design resulted in the organisations of events which, not only provided further input to my research

analysis, but also enabled my academic research including the theoretical analysis to contribute to wider discussion. These events and the media attention generated, brought experiences of intersectional injustices to the attention of a wider audience than I could have achieved through academic means in isolation. The interest raised by these events resulted in further media contact and facilitated my attempts to organise further meetings with the local authority and the voluntary sector. As discussed in Chapter 7, my attempts to secure practical change from the local authority, highlight the wider barriers to the systemic change required to achieve intersectional justice. A movement built on the merging of the achievements and experiences of the disabled peoples movement, the asylum sector, and allies, could assert significantly greater influence than an individual researcher or any of these sectors in isolation. Furthermore, new collaborations and raising the profile of experiences that have been marginalised from public attention, can increase awareness of possibilities beyond minor adjustments of the current hegemony. These research methods enabled my thesis to have significantly greater impact than that routinely obtained through a doctoral thesis, which is rarely accessible to large numbers of people. For these reasons, I seek to expand on this approach and build wider collaborations for future publicly engaged academic research.

8.4 Limitations

Notwithstanding the contributions made by this study, I acknowledge several limitations. As I have stressed, my perception, like anyone else's, stems from my subject position. Therefore, I can never hope to understand all possibilities. For this reason, I sought contributors with diverse subject positions. However, there are undoubtedly many perspectives which I have not included. My analysis builds on the input from people who contributed, without assuming these people represent all people in any sector.

My focus has been predominantly on the asylum sector, with less consideration given to the barriers within the disabled people's movement. Contributions from disabled people have been from activists or members of disabled people's organisations, rather than from disability charities, which might be considered equivalent to the asylum voluntary sector. Hegemonic barriers are not restricted to any one sector. However, more specific analysis of intersectional barriers and possible solutions within the disabled people's movement and disability charities would require separate analysis.

The most significant ethical dilemma I have faced during this study is whether it would be more useful to put all my energy into attempting to support individuals to meet their immediate needs, rather than to write an academic study. This is of course the same dilemma faced by the asylum voluntary sector when choosing to prioritise focus on reduction of symptoms, rather than causes, of injustice. There have been significant amounts of campaigning, awareness-raising, and support to individuals during the study, but my focus has been on understanding the causes, and thereby contributing to more effective resistance. Without contestation, there will be never-ending examples of injustice. Nonetheless, I am aware that for people

facing the immediacy of struggles for survival, contestation of systemic causes takes too long.

This project makes a successful contribution to uncovering the discursive roots of current injustices associated with disability and forced migration. However, a key part of my motivation was to contribute to addressing these injustices. I am unconvinced that this has been achieved. Oliver and Barnes (2012, p.182) criticise poststructuralists who use 'academic language in a way that disables rather than enables those without an academic background'. This criticism could be widely applied to academic discourse, rather than exclusively targeted at poststructuralism, which does not negate the value of theoretical contribution. My next step is to rewrite this thesis in a more accessible form to contribute to struggles for social justice.

Conclusion and next steps

My analysis concludes that far from making 'no sense', individual examples of apparently irrational injustice are the logical consequence of hegemonic distinctions of entitlement. Despite assertions of the need to address disadvantages associated with disability and forced migration, the solutions presented by people with different subject positions fail to contest the existence of inequalities of access to the services and support required to meet human needs. Entitlement to such services has become dependent not on need, but on precarious criteria of human worth. People with impairments that limit productivity, or who seek sanctuary without capacity for significant economic contribution, are thereby hegemonically framed as a burden, the impact of which must be reduced for the benefit of the wider population. Hegemonic acceptance of the inevitability, if not the legitimacy, of distinctions of entitlement is such as to present the existence of disadvantage associated with disability and migration status as if it were intractable. However, lack of effective contestation of these conditions is not evidence of inevitability. Poststructural analysis highlights the contingency of the existing social order. I therefore conclude that to address the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers would require dislocation of the discursive basis of the existing social order. The enormity of this task is not reduced by pragmatic initiatives designed to reduce the impact of current disadvantage for certain people. Instead, such initiatives reinforce hegemonic acceptance of the legitimacy of distinctions of entitlement.

A system based on neoliberal capitalism positions economic productivity as the paramount goal, with state expenditure framed as a burden to be reduced. However, as my analysis has shown, it would be incorrect to suggest that disabled asylum seekers and refugees are always, or inevitably, disadvantaged in the current system. Some initiatives exist to reduce the restrictions of the immigration system for people labelled as 'vulnerable'. The criteria of such vulnerability may include disabled people. However, such initiatives maintain hegemonic discursive inequalities intact. If provision of support relies on political logics of generosity towards those framed as worthy, this reinforces the apparent legitimacy of logics of defence towards a wider population of migrants or disabled people. This analysis

concludes that the restrictions and inequalities experienced by disabled asylum seekers cannot be solved by identifying certain individuals framed as exceptions to wider restrictions, or by adjusting the criteria for eligibility to services and support. Contestation must move beyond adjusting the balance between political logics of generosity and defence, to dislocate the assumed legitimacy of inequalities of human worth and the primacy of the nation-state which are inherent in hegemonic social logics. Lack of contestation of these discursive representations of the problem results in apparent solutions being focused on minor adjustments and policing rather than hegemonic challenge and a moment of politics. Intersectional injustices experienced by disabled asylum seekers cannot be addressed without dislocating systemic distinctions of human worth.

The failure of all sides documented in this thesis, to provide substantive contestation of intersectional restrictions and inequalities provides warnings for the development of effective resistance. However, hegemonic discourse is inherently contingent and therefore has continuous potential for transformation. There has been significant change during the period of undertaking this investigation. Public reaction to media representations of the Syrian conflict influenced government action towards those affected. It temporarily appeared as if a moment of politics might emerge. However, the moment was quelled by the assertion of generosity, rather than equal rights, or 'a part for those with no part' (Rancière, 1999). The contingency of the social order has never been more apparent. I conclude this thesis during the 2020 Covid19 pandemic, which has disproportionately impacted disabled people (Lund and Ayers, 2020). This study has exposed the fallacy of hegemonic notions that intersectional issues of disability and forced migration are intractable minority issues of marginal wider relevance. My analysis has shown that despite acknowledgement of injustice, there is resistance to hegemonic contestation, with current initiatives instead reinforcing hegemonic discursive inequalities. In this context, the persistence of injustice is inevitable. However, the study also highlights the need for intersectional exchange of experiences and achievements. This study has highlighted that the denial of support to any sector of the population facilitates similar restrictions being extended to a wider population. Therefore, an act of solidarity is also an act of self-preservation.

The paradigmatic shift required to build intersectional justice requires collaborative learning and actions of solidarity. The experiences of disabled asylum seekers could provide the impetus to develop a broad-based movement of mutual solidarity through which to contest intersectional injustice and contest the distinctions of human worth which have become hegemonic in contemporary neoliberal society. The political situation in the UK is in a state of crisis requiring urgent remedy, such that future direction is unclear. This potential flux makes it particularly timely to consider what underpins the injustices of the existing social order and how alternatives might be developed. Systemic change and hegemonic contestation may appear too ambitious, however, as Clifford (2020, p.300) writes: 'We have no choice. The stakes have become too high'.

Appendix 1: Anonymised list of contributors to this study

Contributor	Date *	Gender	Method of recording	Form of impairment
Disabled asylum seekers *** (further identifying features have been removed for purposes of anonymity) **das**				
1	10/12/2017	m	own notes	physical and hearing impairment
2	15/01/2018	f	own notes	physical impairment
3	30/08/2018	m	own notes	mental health support needs
4	03/11/2017	f	interview transcription and own notes	physical impairment
5	20/12/2017	m	own notes	physical impairment and learning difficulties
6	01/11/2017	m	own notes	learning difficulties
7	26/01/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	mental distress and physical impairment
8	19/12/2017	f	interview transcription and own notes	physical impairment
9	21/04/2018	m	Transcription of earlier interview and notes from interview with interpreter	mental distress
10	16/04/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	visual impairment
11	01/11/2017	f	interview transcription and own notes	physical impairment
12	01/11/2017	f	interview transcription	learning difficulties

			and own notes	
13	18/09/2018	m	own notes	mental distress
14	01/12/2017	m	own notes	physical impairment
15	01/02/2018	m	own notes	chronic health issue
16	01/02/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	physical impairment
17	30/03/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	visual impairment
18	2018	f,f,f,m,m	own notes	Focus group

Contributor	**Date ***	**Gender**	**Method of recording**	**Area of responsibility**
Voluntary sector employees Immigration vsi				
1	Feb-18	f,f,f	interview transcription and own notes	campaigning and awareness-raising on broader issues of hate crime
2	Feb-18	f	interview transcription and own notes	campaigning, advice service for migrant community
3	30/03/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	support specific to survivors of torture
4	22/11/2017	f	interview transcription and own notes	support and campaigning on behalf of people in detention
5	10/07/1905	f	interview transcription and own notes	service provision for destitute asylum seekers
Voluntary sector employees Disability vsd				
1	14/12/2017	f	interview transcription and own notes	leadership role of membership organisation

2	25/01/2018	f	interview transcription and own notes	local campaigning
Local authority employees Resettlement - laer				
1	13/03/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	Experience working with asylum seekers and resettled Syrian refugees
2	01/11/2017	m,f,f	own notes	Experience working with asylum seekers and resettled Syrian refugees
3	19/01/2018	f	interview transcription and own notes	Experience working with asylum seekers and resettled Syrian refugees
Local authority employees – social work laesw				
4	18/09/2018	f,f,f	interview transcription and own notes	3 social workers, involved with asylum seekers with care needs
5	20/09/2018	f	interview transcription and own notes	email correspondence with social worker responsbile for providing care for asylum seekers

Civil servants Home Office and DWP - cs				
1	24/01/2018	f,f,f	interview transcription and own notes	focus group of employees working in asylum and immigration service provision
2	17/11/2017	m	interview transcription and own notes	policy responsibilities
3	01/10/2017	f	interview transcription and own notes	resettlement programme
4	26/03/2018	f	interview transcription	provision for disabled people

			and own notes	

Legal professionals lp				
1	06/02/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	solicitor
2	20/01/2018	f	interview transcription and own notes	barrister
3	Sep-18	f	email	solicitor
4	Sep-18	m.f	own notes	

Politicians pol				
1	16/04/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	national level
2	04/01/2018	f	interview transcription and own notes	City Council

Unpaid activists or volunteers disabled citizens udc				
1	01/02/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	student and volunteer
2	10/02/2018	f	interview transcription and own notes	activist with many years involvement in both disabled people's movement and asylum sector
3	13/03/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	activist with many years involvement in disabled people's movement but new to asylum sector
4		m, f	own notes	asylum seeker and citizen in conversation,

				comparing experiences, new to intersectional issues
5	01/02/2018	m	interview transcription and own notes	campaigner with history of work in multiple disabled people's organisations

Immigration sector uis				
5	Nov-17	f	interview transcription and own notes	volunteer working with asylum seekers
6	14/12/2015	m	interview transcription and own notes	volunteer in local refugee support group

Meeting notes				
national nm				
1	18/01/2018, 24/01/2018 a, 27/04/2018 b, 17/1/2019 c.	NGO sector Nasf equality meeting	meeting minutes and own notes	national level forum for Home Office and NGO staff working in the asylum sector. Some meetings are just the NGO staff, others are with Home Office staff included.
district and city dcm				
Mendip migrant's forum **2**	13/12/2017		meeting minutes and own notes	District Council initiative. Elected Councillors, Council officials, statutory and voluntary service providers
local lm				
Frome Syrian support public meeting **3**	16/11/2017		own notes	Small town initiative - public meeting for anyone interested in learning about support being provided to Syrian refugees in the town

Events organised as part of this research process				
Event bringing together disability movement, asylum sector and allies dmas1				
	29/06/2018		Own notes from planning meetings, event itself and media coverage.	This took place in Bristol but included people from different parts of the country and received national media coverage.
Roundtable meetings at Bristol City Hall, bringing disabled citizens and asylum seekers together with Bristol City Council, social care staff, asylum voluntary sector staff.				
Dmas2	28th September and 12th November 2018		Own notes and minutes from meetings.	City Council meetings focused on social care for disabled asylum seekers
Dmas3	27/07/2019		notes from planning meeting and event exploring the history of our struggles	This event was collaboratively organised by disabled people in Bristol, with funding from Universities of Bristol and Bath.
	*****date of first or biggest research involvement. Many people were involved on many subsequent occasions			
	** accommodation type and migration status are only known if the person chooses to mention it			
	*** some details have been changed to protect anonymity			

Appendix 2: Loose basis of topic guide

Interviews and group discussions to explore what determines how the needs of disabled asylum seekers are met in the immigration system and disability sector / who is prioritised / barriers that are experienced / what action is taken to overcome barriers / if and what needs to change.

Topic guide formed prompts for discussion when needed. Adapted for civil servants, politicians, voluntary sector staff, disabled activists, and disabled asylum seekers, refugees.

Introduction

Welcome, thank for coming.

Introduce self and research purpose

Recording – say if anything want unrecorded.

Anonymity in my research,

Confidentiality of focus groups

Free to refuse to answer any questions / no right or wrong answer, just aiming for some discussion of ideas, experiences, possible solutions.

Loose basis for questions:

Needs

- What see as the main needs and problems faced by disabled asylum seekers and refugees?
- How the needs of disabled asylum seekers and refugees are currently met?
- Whose needs are most easily met? What prevents needs of others being met? What determines this?
    - Prompt: do any of these make any difference?
        - Different forms of migration status (asylum seeker, refused asylum seeker, refugee, VPRS)
        - Nature of asylum claim
        - Nature of impairment? – physical, sensory, mental health…
        - Nationality / Gender / age
        - Social skills / ability to cook / play music /Luck / Who a person meets?
        - Language skills / ability to push for needs?

Barriers

- What access barriers are there to meeting these needs?
- What causes the barriers?
- Do any people get greater support?
- What causes differences in how people are treated?

- Who provides or should provide support – Home Office / contracted providers / vol. orgs / public support?
  What difference does it make?
- Are any adaptations made for disabled asylum seekers? By whom? What?
- How barriers could be addressed?
- What is the problem?

Solutions

- What else needs to change? And how?
- Who would need to act and why?

What, if anything, do you think needs to change for the needs of disabled asylum seekers and refugees to be met?

What / who would need to act? How and why?

would there be any risks or disadvantages of giving greater priority to disabled asylum seekers?

What needs to change / who would need to lead in making this change?

- Thinking about own role what like to change in relation to d.a.s. - in terms of personal role or contributing to wider change?
- What do you think is possible to achieve?
- Who else /what else would need to happen for the wider change to take place?
- Reason for any differences between what would like and what think realistic?

Appendix 3: Recruitment fliers translated into multiple languages.

Are you an asylum seeker or refugee?

Do you have an impairment, long-term injury or illness that affects your everyday life?

> **For example**: this could be **physical** such as difficulties with your legs, arms or back. It could be **sensory**, maybe you don't see or hear as much as other people. It could be that you experience **mental distress** or that you find it **hard to understand** or remember complicated information.

Do you face barriers in your life because of these issues? Are you **Disabled**?

If so, would you be willing to talk to me about your experiences and ideas? This is part of my research at University of Bath.

I can provide interpreters and pay for any costs. We can meet in a café or somewhere that you choose. Anything you say will be confidential. You don't have to commit to staying in the group, you can drop out at any time.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact:

Rebecca Yeo [redacted] **r.a.yeo@bath.ac.uk**

Arabic

هل أنت طالب لجوء أو لاجئ؟

هل تعاني من أي إعاقة، أو إصابة مستديمة، أو أي مرض يؤثر في حياتك اليومية؟

على سبيل المثال: قد يكونذلك **بدنيًا**، كمشاكل في الساقين أو الذراعين أو الظهر، كما يمكن أن يكون **حسّيًا**، كعدم التمكن من الرؤية أو السمع بقدر الآخرين، أو قد يكون ذلك**نفسيًا** أو **ذهنيًا**، بحيث يشكّل صعوبة في التركيز أو التواصل مع الآخرين.

هل تواجه أي عقبات في حياتك بسبب هذه المشاكل؟ هل أنت من **ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة؟**

إذا كان الأمر كذلك، إذن، فهل ترغب في التحدث معي بشأن تجاربك وأفكارك؟إنني بصدد تكوين مجموعة صغيرة لمناقشة الوسائل التي يمكن بها تجاوز هذه العقبات.

يمكنني توفير مترجمين فوريين والتكفلبأي تكاليف أو نفقات. ويمكننا أن نلتقي في أحد المقاهي أو في أي مكان آخر تختاره. وأؤكد لك أن كل ما تقولهسيُعاملبسرية تامة.كما أنك غير مضطر إلىالمشاركة في المجموعة، بل ويمكنك الانسحاب منها متى شئت.

إذا كنت ترغب في معرفة المزيدحول هذا الأمر،فيُرجى الاتصال:

For more information please contact: **Rebecca Yeo** [redacted] [redacted] **r.a.yeo@bath.ac.uk**

Farsi

آیا میاجر یا پناج ستید؟
آیا دارای بیماری، جراحت ط لّانی مدت یا معل لّیتی ستید کو زندگی ر زًانو شما را تحت تأثیر قرار داده است؟
مثال :ایه مشکل ممکه است**جسمی** تاشذ ماوذ مشکل در واحی پا، دست یا کمر .ممکه است **حسی** تاشذ، مثلاً وت اُویذ ماوذ سایریه ت خ تُی تشی یُذ یا تثیبیذ .یا ممکه است **ر حًی یار اًنی** تاشذ تمرکس یا ارتثاط تا سایر افراد را ترای شما دش اُر سازد.
آیا ایه مشکل تاعث ایجاد م اُوعی در زوذگی شما شذي است؟ آیا **نات اّن** سُتیذ؟
اگر پاسخ شما مثثت است، آیا مایل سُتیذ ک ذِرتاري ایه تجارب تَفکرتان در ایه تاري تا مه صحثت کیذ؟ مه گر یَ
ک چُکی را ترای تحث در م رُد وح یُ از میان ترداشته ایه م اُوع ایجاد کردي ام.
م یت اُوم مترجماوی را را در اختیارتان قرار د مٌ رٌگ وُ سٌیی ای را پرداخت کنم .می ت اُویم در ق یٍُ خاو یا جایی ت اوتخاب شما تا مٌ ملاقات کنیم .حرف اُی شما محرماو تاقی خ اُ ذٌ ماوذ .یٌچ تع ذِی ترای ماوذن در گر یَ مت جُ شما
وخ اُ ذٌ ت دُ رٌ زمان ک خ اُستیذ می ت اُویذ گر یَ را ترک کیذ.
ترای کسة اطلاعات تیشتر لطفاً از طریق زیر اقذام کیذ:

Kurdish

داوای مافی پەنابەرێتی دەکەیت یان ئاوارەیت؟
هیچ نوقسانی، بریندارِیی درێژخایەن یان نەخۆشیەکەت هەیە کاریگەریی لەسەر ژیانی
رۆژانەت دروست بکات؟

بۆ نمونە :دەکرێت **جەستەیی** بێت، وەک کێشە لە قاچەکانت، قۆڵت یان پشتت .دەکرێت **هەستەوەری** بێت، لەوانەیە توانای بینین یان بیستنت وەک خەڵکی تر نەبێت .دەکرێت **دەروونی** یان **زهنی** بێت، کە واتڵێدەکات نەتوانیت تەرکیز بکەیت یان پەیوەندی لەگەڵ خەڵک دروست بکەیت.
ئایا رووبەڕووی بەربەست دەبینەوە لە ژیانی خۆتدا بەهۆی ئەو کێشانەوە؟ ئایا **کەمئەندامیت؟** ئەگەر بەڵێ، ئارەزوو دەکەیت قسەم لەگەڵ بکەیت دەربارەی ئەزموون و بیرۆکەکانی خۆت؟ من
کۆمەڵەیەکی بچووک دروست دەکەم کە باسی چۆنێتی لابردنی ئەو بەربەستانە بکەین.
دەتوانم وەرگێڕ دابین بکەم و تێچووەکان بگرمە ئەستۆ .دەتوانین لە کافێیەک یان هەر شوێنێکی تر کە
تۆ دەتەوێت یەک ببینین .هەر شتێک کە تۆ دەیڵێیت بە نهێنی دەمێنێتەوە .مەرج نیە پابەندبیت بە
بەشداریت لە کۆمەڵەکە، دەتوانیت هەر کاتێک بێت بکشێیتەوە.
: ئەگەر حەزدەکەیت زانیاریی زیاتر بزانیت، تکایە پەیوەندی بکە بە

Somali

Ma tahay magangaliye doone ama qaxooti?

Ma leedahay maqalka oo ku dhib ah ama dhawac muddo-dheer ama jirooyiin saameyaa nolol maalmeedkaaga?

> Tusaale ahaan: tani waxay noqon kartaa jirka sida dhibaatooyinka lugahaaga, gacmahaaga, ama dhabarka. Waxay noqon kartaa dareenka; waxaa laga yaabaa inaad arki karin ama aad maqli karin dadka kale. Ama waxay noqon kartaa neerfaha ama xaaladda caafimaadka dhimirka taas oo ka dhibaato kugu ah adiga ama la xiriirta dadka kale.

Ma la kulantaa dhibaatooyinka nolosha sababtoo ah arrimahaan? Ma tahay naafo?

Haddii ay saa tahay, ma rajeynaysaa inaad aniga igala hadasho wax ku saabsan waayo aragnimadaada ama fikradahaada? Waxaan sameeynayaa koox yar si looga wada hadalo si loo saari lahaa dhibaatooyinka

Waxaann ku siin karaa turjumaano waxana bixin karaa qiimo walba. Waxaan ku kulmi karnaa maqayad ama meel kale oo aad jaceshahay. Wax walba oo aad dhahdo waxay noqon doonaan sir. Ma u baahnay inaad ku lug yeelato kooxda, waxaad ka bixi kartaa waqti walba.

Haddii aad danayso inaad wax badan ka ogaato fadlan ila soo xiriir.

Appendix 4: Consent Form

Consent form

An exploration of the causes, impact and possible alternatives to the relative entitlements associated with disability and forced migration.

Researcher: Rebecca Yeo

I have been given an information sheet on the purpose of this research project, what is expected of me and my right to withdraw.

I understand this study is related to Rebecca Yeo's research at University of Bath. I have also been given a chance to ask questions and clarification was given to me on all of the questions I have raised.

I am aware that this information is to be kept confidential between myself and the researcher (as well as academics related to this study). I know my name is not to be used in the report and I am guaranteed anonymity.

I have given my consent to participate in this study with a full knowledge about it.

Interviewee name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/_____

Information for contributors

Information Sheet

An exploration of the causes, impact and possible alternatives to the relative entitlements associated with disability and forced migration.

Researcher: Rebecca Yeo

Doctoral student, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Bath.

This sheet briefly explains the purpose of the study. Please ask if you have any question or would like any further information either now or in the future.

What is the purpose of the research?

- This study looks at issues of disability in the asylum and immigration system.
- The aim is to better understand the difficulties currently associated with disability and forced migration, and to gather ideas as to how difficulties might be addressed.
- I am interviewing policymakers, service providers and community groups working with asylum seekers and refugees. I am also working with disabled asylum seekers and refugees, bringing their views and experiences to a wider audience.

Why have you been invited?

- I am keen to understand your perspective regarding issues of asylum, immigration and / or disability
- Your expertise will help to shape the study.

What will participation involve?

- Interviews and presentations may be recorded for purposes of note taking only. All recordings will be destroyed after use.

What happens to the information in the project?

- All data will be made anonymous and kept confidential, unless there are particular areas that you specifically agree to publicise.

What happens next?

If you are happy to be involved in this study, please could you sign the attached consent form.

There is no obligation to be involved if you would prefer not to be.

Contact details:

If you have any questions/concerns or would like further information, during or after the investigation, please contact:

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Many thanks for your interest.

Rebecca Yeo

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